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THE NEWSPAPER FOR MARGATE, RAMSGATE, BROADSTAIRS AND DISTRICT



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SO WHO IS THE COUNCIL MOLE?

WHAT'S ON & WATCH

yourkenttv.co.uk



SHINING LIGHT: Sir Bob Geldof turns on Margate's Christmas lights. Search 'Geldof'

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ISSN 1753-0970



ISLE'S HISTORY ON CALENDAR

Remember the Brookland Racers at Dreamland? This image is just one from a calendar showcasing photos from Thanet's past. Printed by Thanet Press, the limited-edition 2009 calendar will be sold to raise funds for the Save Dreamland Campaign and the Friends of the Shell Grotto.

It features images depicting the bygone days of Dreamland, Margate Cinema and the Grotto itself.

Thanet Press commercial manager Craig Durrant said: "Thanet Press regularly produces its own calendar to promote the area. We are keen to support local charities and with Dreamland being at the forefront of the community's minds, it seemed a worthy cause to support, along with the Shell Grotto."

The calendar is priced at £6.50 (plus £2.50 postage and packing) and is available from the Shell Grotto or by writing to Calendar Offer, Margate Shell Grotto, Grotto Hill, Margate CT9 2BU.

Cheques should be made out to the Friends of The Shell Grotto. Alternatively, phone the grotto on 01843 220008 to make credit-card orders.

■ BY TOM BETTS

THE isle's fervent blogging scene is ruffling feathers at Thanet council.

According to official documents, a monitoring officer has been looking at the impact that blogs – internet diaries or private news services – are having on council time and resources.

At a recent meeting of the standards committee, an officer raised concerns that "information concerning governance and internal working of the council was finding its way on to local blog sites".

The remarks hint at leaks within the council itself, but who is the mole?

The anonymous Ramsgate blogger, Eastcliff Richard, told Yourthanet: "I don't have any moles at Thanet District Council and wouldn't even know how to go about finding one."

"What does happen is that I get heaps of anonymous emails, some of which could well be from disgruntled TDCers. If they have any sense, they'll presumably be sending these from home rather than the office."

He added: "Maybe because I'm critical of the council and a thorn in their side, I attract people with an axe to grind."

"I get emails with insider gossip from councilors who would, of course, be picking up these titbits in the normal course of their democratic duties and exercising their right to free speech. I've never burdened the council with so much as an FOI request."

The monitoring officer said that, unlike the Press, blog sites are not accountable to the Press Complaints Commission.

But Tony Flair, of the Big News Margate blog, said: "That suggestion is not true. My name is at the top of my site and will remain so, which means I am accountable just like politicians are."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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COST: Lifeboats rely on their radios to relay life-saving information during sea rescues

Lifeboats facing a high price to use radio waves

MEMBERS of the RNLI in Thanet are worried about a possible rise in national radio licence fees to a staggering £260,000.

Currently, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) pays about £40,000 for the use of radio channels in the stations, lifeboats, launching vehicles and pager systems used for search-and-rescue.

But Government body OFCOM, which regulates the UK's communications industries, is proposing to introduce a scheme known as administered incentivised pricing, which could see costs rise by 600 per cent.

Discounted

The current fees paid by the RNLI are at a discounted rate of 50 per cent due to it being a charity.

Mike Baker, operations manager at Margate lifeboat station, said: "At the present time we are providing a service which is free of charge, but now we may be expected to pay for it. It's hardly encouraging."

"If the radio licences go up, it's going to impose a significant cost on us. We only use our radios for life-saving operations – we're not out there for fun!"

He added: "There may be some movement, and there are suggestions the licence fees may be less than what they are proposing as far as the lifeboats are concerned, but we're still waiting for confirmation."

"There has been a lot of adverse publicity from within the industry towards the Government, so I think they are looking at it again."

■ BY MARIJKE COX

Cutbacks may have to be made in other areas to ensure the bill can be paid if proposals go ahead.

Amy Ross, media relations manager at the RNLI, said: "It means we will end up spending a huge amount of money on one thing, limiting funds for other important life-saving equipment.

"There have been some reports that this will affect the operation of our lifeboat service. We are pleased to confirm this is not the case and our lifeboats are available to launch as normal to anyone."

The RNLI maintains it should not have to pay for the use of the radio spectrum when used solely for search-and-rescue purposes, and a petition has been set up to protect the charity from paying licence fees for using maritime frequencies.

More than 12,000 signatures have been added to the petition, which is on the No 10 website, the official site of the Prime Minister's office.

A spokesman said: "Our general feeling is this is a very big cost. We don't want to pay out, but communications are vital to us and the coastguards.

"A coastguard radio is necessary as part of the rescue service. If plans go ahead we have to find this money."

"RNLI's priority is making sure our boats are sufficiently equipped."

OFCOM's final decision by will be implemented by April 2009.

You can sign up at <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/RNLI-RF-licences/>.

Bloggers: we are an important democratic tool

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

The council also thinks that "misinformation" is consuming valuable employee man hours.

Clr Simon Moores writes for Yourthanet's blogger section and runs his own Thanet Life site.

He said: "The blogs can help to hold local government to account and that's a good thing, but I think local officers and elected officials are concerned by the more extreme views represented, especially when they touch on defamatory and libellous comments by anonymous people posting."

He added: "Local government is still coming to terms with blogging as a democratic tool but, yes, it can be used to manipulate opinion with untrue information."

He concurred that blogging can waste officers' time.

Ramsgate bookshop owner Michael Child runs Thanet Online.

He said: "The council has got this completely the wrong way round. It is wasting an enormous amount of officers' time by not publishing basic information on its own website."

"Things like the contaminated land register are important documents that affect public safety and should be readily available."

Bertie Biggles', author of Thanet Strife, which strongly opposed the China Gateway project, also says blogging is a good thing.

He said: "The best ones have all been researching issues successfully and bringing attention to them. It is not uninformed gossip, rumour-mongering or misinformation, as Thanet council would like to claim."

"It fails to realise that the internet has changed the ability of its citizens to gather information and disseminate it widely. Blogs are carrying out a very useful function in Thanet."

Car park argument

POLICE were called to the Westwood Cross shopping centre on Saturday after reports of a fight.

Members of the public raised concerns that an altercation between a male pedestrian and a man and a woman in a car had taken place.

The man in the car suffered a split lip and the woman said she had been grabbed round the throat and had her necklace broken at about 1.40pm.

They had been reversing out of a space in the car park.

A man was later arrested on suspicion of actual bodily harm, assault and criminal damage and has been bailed until December 29, pending a decision to prosecute.

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'Disability fund was not raided for windows'

A DISPUTE over the windows at Thanet council's chambers in Margate has resurfaced.

Council leader Cllr Sandy Ezekiel says allegations that the authority appropriated £120,000 from funds meant for bringing council-owned buildings up to scratch for people with disabilities are "completely untrue".

However Labour's Cllr Liz Green claims the council used money it shouldn't have to fit double-glazing.

She said: "I am horrified to hear Thanet council has siphoned off £120,000 from a fund specifically intended to improve life for residents with disabilities.

"To discover this money has been spent on new windows for their own offices will, I am sure, shock many residents."

The council has to pay for its buildings to be brought up to standard under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

Cllr Green claimed that at a recent meeting of the Thanet Disability Forum, an organisation set up to champion the needs of disabled people, Cllr Ezekiel asked for the min-

utes of a previous meeting to be changed.

She said he was unhappy the minutes stated the group planned to approach the council to ask if £120,000 had been taken from the disability budget to provide new windows at the Cecil Square offices. However, Cllr Ezekiel is dismissing the claim.

He said: "Cllr Green is accusing us of taking that money out of the grant and that is completely and totally untrue.

"The grant she may be referring to is the asset grant, set aside to make sure all our buildings fall within DDA regulations, and they do.

"The money then went back into the pot. It's an asset pot and the money did not come out of any grant."

Cllr Ezekiel said the next thing on the agenda was the refurbishing of all council buildings to reduce emissions.

"Under the Kyoto agreement we will be making sure all our staff are working under one roof," he said.

"Putting in the double-glazing means we will reduce our environmental impact. We have no choice but to do that. We embarrassed the Government into match-funding us some time ago.

"They wouldn't match-fund us, despite Thanet South MP Steve Ladyman saying they would, and after a campaign by him and myself to make sure the Government did respond and match-fund us, indeed they did in the end."

The single-glazed windows at the Cecil Street offices are the original windows installed when the building was built in the 1970s.

A council spokeswoman said they had come to "the end of their effective life". She added: "In addition to their deteriorating condition, all the windows are of single-glazed, metal-frame design and therefore not efficient for conserving energy."

New legislation requires larger commercial buildings to have energy efficiency assessments and councils have an obligation to reduce CO₂ emissions.

The cost to Thanet council is predicted to be £288,220 over three financial years.

Klaxons' Steffan mans the decks

STEFFAN Halperin, the drummer from indie-band Klaxons, DJs in Margate this week.

He will appear at the Totally Wired club night on Friday from 9pm.

The event takes place in the back of the Punch and Judy pub, near Dreamland, on Marine Terrace.

Klaxons won the Mercury Music Prize in 2007 for their album Myths Of The Near Future and were seen as key players in kick-starting the 'new rave' movement championed by the music press.

They are set to release their second album next year.

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Conflict in Cliftonville.
Search 'tragner'

Bar allays village late-music fears

THE owners of a restaurant and bar in Minster have applied for a late licence, upsetting some villagers.

They have asked to have Mortons Fork's licence extended to 1am by removing conditions set down by the Thanet council licensing committee.

Shaun and Elizabeth Newstead had wanted to put on live music until midnight but have agreed to an 11pm deadline instead.

They also want to continue to sell alcohol up until midnight every day of the week but to amend the licence to sell tea and coffee until that time and also during the mornings to catch more trade.

Mortons Fork is in Station Road, one of the village's main thoroughfares, and the licensing committee has received letters of objection to the plans.

One neighbour in Station Road wrote: "If the owners are awarded a music licence, not only will the noise destroy the peace of the village, it will devalue our property and that of others living in the area."

Another neighbour in the same road wrote: "While we are sympathetic to the licensee's attempts to build their business, we wish to reg-

ister our strongest objection to the changes in licensing."

The resident also cites noise pollution, parking problems, disturbance by late-night drinkers and the fact that the restaurant is in a conservation area.

But Mr Newstead said: "They have the wrong end of the stick. The live music will be occasional events will be few and far between.

"As it stands with my present licence, if we want to have live music we have to apply for a £21-per-time temporary events notice, which doesn't make financial sense.

"We have agreed with the environmental health officer that the latest live music would be 11pm, to bring it in line with The Bell pub and the village hall.

"Opening earlier is for the teas and coffees for mums on the school run and things like that. As it stands, I am turning business down and in the present climate you have to go for everything you can."

Environmental health officer Jaqui Rands said she had no objection to the plans so long as the amendments were made so that live music ceased by 11pm.



YES, IT IS HOT IN HERE

Disco Inferno returns to Margate Winter Gardens this month, with the first Christmas-themed party taking place on Saturday, December 20.

Disco Inferno has established itself as one of the isle's biggest and friendliest parties, with people coming from across the county to indulge in musical nostalgia.

All tickets are sold prior to the night, meaning booking is essential.

Disco and chart hits from the 70s and 80s will be thumping out, along with popular Christmas tunes from the era.

And organisers want revellers to don fancy dress to help make Disco Inferno the best and biggest night out in December. Phone 01843 296111 for tickets.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Cancer unit invites patients to celebrate

THE QEQM Hospital in Margate is holding a celebration for cancer patients past and present this week.

The tenth anniversary of its annual cancer care Christmas party will be held at the hospital's Viking Day Unit on Friday from 5pm-7pm.

Former cancer patients and their friends and families are invited.

A hospital spokeswoman said: "We want to track down anyone who has received cancer care in the area and ask them to come along to the party to celebrate its tenth year."

Previous years have been very successful, but this year staff hope it will be the best one yet as it is the tenth anniversary party."

A small buffet will be available, but any donations of either food or a small gift for the tombola would be gratefully accepted.

Last year's tombola helped to raise more than £150 for the cancer care appeal.

Town flying high as an 'authentic' place

A RESPECTED travel website has listed Ramsgate as one of the most authentic places to visit in the world.

The British Airways High Life site features contributions by stars such as Joan Rivers and John Simpson and is the online hub of its acclaimed in-flight magazine.

Its description of the town reads: "It's an intact Regency town, with a spectacular, sandy beach and a splendid topography, having been built on cliffs. There are fireworks practically every weekend and an authentic mix of the raffish and the bohemian."

See www.bahighlife.com/Destinations/The-50-most-authentic-places-on-earth.html to view the list in full.

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Is Anybody Out There? Find out by searching 'anybody'



PANTO STARS JOIN THE FUN

Members of Margate Operatic Society helped Santa to his grotto to mark the start of the Christmas season at Westwood Cross.

They were dressed as characters from their pantomime Babes In The Wood and it was certainly party time at the shopping centre as hundreds welcomed Santa's arrival and saw TV presenter Stephen Mulhern switch on the festive lights.

Youngsters from St Ethelbert's Catholic primary school in Ramsgate joined their counterparts from Cliftonville primary as they took part in a lantern procession.

Alongside them were Trinity Cheerleaders and samba band Bloco Fogo.

Members of the Dickens Festival and the Rotary Club of Margate, together with the playful Hooden Horses, also took part in the spectacle.

Tom Price, general manager at Westwood Cross, said: "So many people have given up their time for nothing to make this community event such a success.

"You've only got to look at the children's faces when they see Santa to see all the hard work has been worthwhile."

Sir Bob lights up the town with his banter

HIS remarks about Margate sparked a storm earlier this year, but on Saturday Sir Bob Geldof made good his promise to switch on the town's Christmas lights.

The star was the embodiment of charm as he described Mayor Brian Sullivan as a "cheeky sod" and made jokes from the top of an open-top double-decker bus.

Flanked by Thanet council leader Sandy Ezekiel, the mayor and other members of the Margate Charter Trustees, Sir Bob found the piazza crowd in a forgiving mood and good cheer. Despite the freezing sea winds, they gave him a warm welcome after he was introduced by the mayor.

With tongue firmly in cheek, he said: "I just happened to remark in passing that Margate had become a dump and I was besieged by letters from Margatians agreeing with me!

"But the one I liked best was the head-

■ BY TOM BETTS

master who pondered that my comments were another slap in the face for the youth of Margate.

"My contention is that the youth of Margate hadn't had their faces slapped enough."

"And at this point I get a call from the mayor saying 'Now you've done it, you're going to have to come and do the lights!'"

Described by the mayor as "a true champion of the people" in his introduction, Sir Bob spoke for a couple of minutes prior to flicking the switch.

"It's a vain attempt to make the place look pretty. I understand that, so we'll see in a few minutes whether he's succeeded or not," he said. "I'm very glad to be here tonight and frankly your presence just goes to my argument that you're all mad down here!"

"It's freezing, it's just stopped p***** rain

and we're here to see a few Woolworths 40-watt lightbulbs turned on!"

He added: "I live up the road, I've come here with my family for the last 25 years and every time I've come here the people of Margate have been so welcoming that it's only a debt of honour to come here and in a tiny way give a little bit back to this fantastic town."

"It's a great pleasure and a great honour to be here tonight. Happy Christmas everybody, and a great new year."

Sir Bob added that it was possible for the generations of the 2000s to "reinvent this place" and rebuild it into one of the "most beautiful towns in Britain".

After the display was illuminated, Sir Bob headed down the steps of the bus and hopped into a chauffeur-driven silver Skoda to be whisked to Heathrow airport for a trip to the Middle East.

He had rearranged his plans so he could come to Margate after last week cancelling his appearance.

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DIRTY: Residents are unhappy that they now have to call out a street-cleaning service which they pay for anyway

Anger as regular street-cleaning service is binned

STREET-CLEANING has been cut back in parts of the isle following the introduction of wheelie-bins... and some residents are not happy.

The focus on cleaning in town centres, where most litter is reportedly dropped, means those with wheelie-bins now miss out.

One disgruntled resident from Martins Close in Ramsgate said: "I was told by an officer that the road-sweepers aren't going to come here and sweep regularly.

"For several years I've been calling up and saying it's needed. As I understand it, it's because of cutbacks, and we're still paying our rates for it to be done."

The woman, who chose to remain anonymous, added: "They told me they would always come and do it if I called up and requested it, but I'm paying for it anyway!"

Some of the litter on the streets is put down to herring gulls, which rip up bags in the search for food.

Cllr Shirley Tomlinson, the council's cabinet member for commercial and environmental services, said: "With the introduction of wheeled bins to the vast majority of homes across Thanet, waste is now contained in many areas, safely away from seagulls, which means the amount of rubbish and litter on the streets is much lower than it had been previously.

■ BY TOM BETTS

"As a result of this, we are therefore targeting our cleaners where they are needed."

This approach has been developed over the last three years since the introduction of wheeled bins in line with national guidance."

Cllr Tomlinson said: "The bulk of clean-up operations now focuses on places which suffer with the most litter.

Town centres are one area which still get a full service from the street-cleaners.

"As our residents would expect, Thanet council is ensuring it targets its street-cleaning on the areas with the highest footfall that consequently suffer from the highest levels of rubbish. Those are generally our town centres."

The council says it wants to hear about any problem areas in which litter may be building up but is adamant the problem is declining, not getting worse.

Cllr Tomlinson said: "Of course, if there are problems, people can alert us to those and we will do our best to respond."

"It's very disappointing to hear these reports as our figures clearly show that the approach we're taking is paying dividends, with litter levels across Thanet dropping."

"In this particular case, our officers have been out to Martins Close and found no evidence of a problem."

Veterans eat free – they've paid enough

RAMSGATE'S Surin is one of the isle's most acclaimed eateries – and veterans of the armed forces have the chance to eat there for free.

Damrong and Tim Garbutt believe we all owe our former servicemen so much that the least they can do is offer them a free table at their Thai, Cambodian and Lao restaurant.

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yourthanet NEWS IN BRIEF

Police aim to drive cars out of pedestrian zone

MOTORISTS risk ending up in court if they flout restrictions in Margate High Street.

The warning comes from PC Terry Vine, the area's neighbourhood officer.

He says those committing the offence are causing disruption and putting pedestrians in danger by entering the pedestrian zone between 10am and 4pm.

He said: "People seem unaware that cars are not permitted in the pedestrianised area.

"This restriction is in place seven days a week, but motorists are repeatedly using the area on a Saturday and this is causing inconvenience to others while also posing a danger to pedestrians.

"The restrictions are there for a reason and we will not hesitate in taking action against those we find ignoring the law. We will also not accept ignorance as an excuse as it is clear vehicles are not permitted in the area."

PC Vine added: "We are taking action to address this issue as it has been raised as a priority at the PACT [Partners And Communities Together] meeting."

Have your say on plans for airport expansion

PROPOSALS to expand Kent International Airport at Manston are up for debate.

Airport owner Infratil has launched a consultation process and is asking for your views. To join in, visit www.kia-m.com and comment before Friday, December 19.

Alternatively, you can attend a question-and-answer session at the airport's passenger terminal area. These run from 10am-2pm today and from 3pm-7pm tomorrow.

The draft Master Plan covers development of the airport over the next 25 years, including the return of scheduled passenger services. Copies can be downloaded from the airport website, www.kia-m.com.

Fears for elderly man missing from his home

POLICE are "very concerned" for the welfare of an elderly man who went missing on Monday.

Kenneth Hearn, 87, was last seen at his home in Granville Way, Broadstairs, on Monday afternoon and was not home when a carer called just before 6pm.

Mr Hearn suffers from dementia and Alzheimer's disease, and police are worried that he has been outside during the cold weather.

People are being asked to check their gardens, and motorists are urged to report any sightings of an elderly man – possibly in a beige jacket – wandering the streets.

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Tuesday 17th February
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Friday 20th February
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Sunday 22nd February
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Friday 27th February
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Saturday 28th February
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Tuesday 3rd March Billy Ocean in Concert

Friday 20th March
LEMAR in Concert

Saturday 21st March
Bjorn Again

Sunday 5th April
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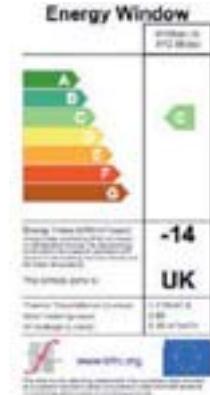
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TODAY'S FORECAST

WEEKEND HIGH TIDES

Chatham	Saturday	4:38pm	5.2m
	Sunday	5:27pm	5.0m
Dover	Saturday	2:46pm	5.6m
	Sunday	3:42pm	5.4m
Dungeness	Saturday	2:40pm	6.6m
	Sunday	3:30pm	6.4m
Ramsgate	Saturday	3:16pm	4.2m
	Sunday	4:12pm	4.1m
Sheerness	Saturday	4:27pm	5.0m
	Sunday	5:16pm	4.9m
Whitstable	Saturday	4:30pm	4.7m
	Sunday	5:24pm	4.5m

FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon		Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	6°C	5°C	8°C	7°C	7°C	Gravesend	6°C	5°C	8°C	8°C	8°C
Canterbury	5°C	5°C	8°C	7°C	7°C	Maidstone	5°C	5°C	8°C	8°C	8°C
Chatham	6°C	5°C	8°C	8°C	8°C	Ramsgate	5°C	5°C	8°C	7°C	7°C
Dartford	6°C	5°C	8°C	8°C	8°C	Rochester	6°C	5°C	8°C	8°C	8°C
Dover	5°C	6°C	7°C	7°C	7°C	Sevenoaks	4°C	3°C	7°C	6°C	6°C
Faversham	6°C	5°C	8°C	8°C	8°C	Sittingbourne	6°C	5°C	8°C	8°C	8°C
Folkestone	5°C	6°C	7°C	7°C	7°C	Tonbridge	5°C	5°C	8°C	8°C	7°C
Gillingham	6°C	5°C	8°C	8°C	8°C	Tun Wells	5°C	5°C	8°C	8°C	7°C

AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	5°C	Madrid	6°C
Athens	17°C	New York	4°C
Barcelona	12°C	Paris	5°C
Beijing	12°C	Rome	16°C
Bombay	30°C	Sydney	31°C
Cape Town	27°C	Tenerife	21°C
Cardiff	5°C	Tokyo	12°C
Gibraltar	12°C	Vancouver	11°C
Hong Kong	21°C	Warsaw	10°C
Las Palmas	19°C	Wellington	19°C



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? Cllrs Clive Hart and Iris Johnston are interested in the future of Margate's Northdown House

Visit house and have your say on future

A DROP-IN session to decide the future of Northdown House will be held next week.

Isle residents are invited to attend the Thanet council-run consultation and back one of two options for the Margate site.

The first is to keep the house for public use, including community, charitable, social services, health services or social services. The second is to transfer the house with additional covenants to the community itself.

Following responses to a consultation earlier this year and subsequent legal advice, the two options for the future use of the building have been settled upon.

Residents are invited to the informal session at Northdown House to discuss the options and can call in at any time on Wednesday, December 10, between 3pm-7pm.

They will also be able to look around the property, speak with council officers and put forward suggestions for any potential viable uses for the premises, which is on the council's asset management list.

It was deemed surplus to the council's requirements, as part of the first asset management consultation held earlier this year, but a decision on its future was deferred.

Cllr Clive Hart, who has fought against the selling of the property, said: "The news is another step forward in our campaign to keep Northdown House as a community asset."



My workplace held a stop smoking group

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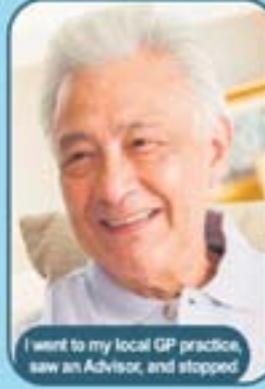
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QUESTION & ANSWER

PETER SHAW



Q&A

Peter Shaw from the Crampton Tower in Broadstairs talks to **Tom Betts** about his role in turning the museum, which was earmarked for closure due to a lack of visitors, into a thriving tourist attraction

Q How and why did you come to get involved with Crampton's Tower?

A During 1998 I was working with my wife managing a local club when I discovered that the caretaker at Dickens House Museum was retiring.

I had known the house for some years as a result of my connection with the Dickens Festival and my love of history and heritage drove to enquire about the position.

The thought of helping to run a museum seemed attractive after the hurly-burly of a club.

I was successful with my application and moved into the museum accommodation in early 1999.

I then discovered that the then curator, Miss Joyce Smith, was also chair of the Crampton Tower Museum, which was about to be closed because of lack of visitors and vision. I visited the tower and immediately saw potential.

I asked to become involved and within a short time the group of friends who joined me there had started to turn the museum around with a fresh approach to business, new displays and a regular opening pattern.

Within a year I was elected as chairman, a post I have enjoyed to date.

Q What are the stresses and strains of the job?

A Although we are all volunteers and none of us earns a penny from the museum, the rigours of maintaining the attraction in the face of the recent stance from the local authority and other agencies has been hard work.

In the main our volunteers are excellent and flexible, which enables the museum to offer a full opening schedule. Occasionally, people find themselves unable to help and that results in a few stressful moments as gaps in staff are filled.

I am pleased to say that in recent years we have not had to close because of staff shortage, but it does sometimes put a strain on those who are willing.

Q What is your favourite aspect of the role?

A I suppose it is when schools visit. Our costumed volunteers from The Victorian Group provide living history and all the displays enchanting the children make the place really come alive.

Another satisfying time is when we have our social events and all the members and volunteers get together and prove what a community hub Crampton Tower has become. The museum currently supports three other groups, with a fourth joining us soon.

With all that energy, there is a great buzz.

Q What do you feel you have achieved in your time at the museum?

A I would say that the least enjoyable side of things is trying to convince certain individuals that Crampton is not just a dusty old museum giving space to a few old men who like to play trains.

Sure, most of us like to play trains, but that is only a very small part of what goes on.

Q Do you feel confident that the tower has a bright future?

A Over the centuries the great and the good have enjoyed what the isle has to offer and that has not changed.

Modern money-making schemes come and go, but the charms of Thanet and its heritage are forever and should be maintained for the common good.

I suppose I consider my most important achievement is to help create a community hub that embraces not only what the museum stands for, but has also provided the wherewithal to support several other groups and promote tourism initiatives like the award-winning Thanet Greeters and town events that include the Broadstairs Dickens Festival.

Regardless of economic pressures, if an organisation is well run and confident in what it does, it will have a future.

Q What are your hobbies and interests?

A I am a train lover and have a large collection of models and like nothing more than to visit preserved lines. I also have personal links with the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway.

I do very much like to give my time to promoting and developing the volunteer tourism initiatives such as Thanet Greeters and Pride in Thanet created by those hard-working folk at Thanet Tourism and Visit Kent.

Despite limited budgets, their enthusiasm is boundless and an inspiration to us.

I also enjoy cooking, as my waistline will testify.

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Reporter Anna White checks out the latest toys that are set to top the best-sellers list this Christmas. Search 'toys'



Union members in Dover take to the streets to stop lorries in a dispute over jobs at the docks. Search 'strike'



Discover the history of one of the county's most famous cattle markets. Search 'cattle'



Why boats had to be launched sideways at one historic dockyard. Search 'sideways'



A new state-of-the-art cafe opens for business at the end of one of the county's best-loved piers. Search 'pier'

EDITOR'S CHOICE

You can view all these videos and others from around the county with the click of a mouse at...
yourkenttv.co.uk

Gardeners go wild encouraging nature

■ BY NICK AMES

MORE than 1,000 people across the county have signed up for the RSPB's Home For Wildlife project – as the first results of this year's survey are revealed.

Some 25,000 gardeners nationwide have signed up to the scheme, which offers free, tailored wildlife-gardening advice to help people transform their homes and gardens into mini-nature reserves.

And the county has proved one of the most enthusiastic embracers of the project, with only four other counties providing a higher number of participants.

The RSPB's Richard Bashford said: "Kent's wildlife is increasingly reliant on our gardens for food, water and shelter, so it's fantastic that people are so committed to making their homes and gardens wildlife-friendly."

"Through Homes For Wildlife, we're trying to reverse the alarming decline of familiar birds such as house sparrows, starlings and song thrushes. Large numbers of these birds make their homes in our gardens."

"The time committed by Kent residents in taking action will help create a better future for them and other wildlife in the not-too-distant future."

Results show participants are carrying out an average of 12 tasks each to help frogs, toads, bats, insects, hedgehogs and birds.

Providing seed mixes, growing flowering nectar-rich plants and planting dense thorny bushes are some of the most popular actions people have taken as part of the Homes For Wildlife project.

Participants also counted birds, bats, bees, butterflies and bugs over the summer.

Across Kent, about 70 per cent counted blackbirds' nests. The snail was the creature most seen across the region, with an average



Picture RSPB (SUE TRANTER)

BOOST: By making our gardens more wildlife-friendly, we can help reverse the decline of birds such as the house sparrow

of 13 per garden, one more than the national average.

Other results reveal that about 80 per cent of gardens surveyed had frogs, around a third had toads, and half had newts. About half of the gardens participating in the region also had bats and hedgehogs.

Kent was the only county in the South East to record the national average of five house sparrows per garden. All other counties in the region lagged behind with an average of three.

Despite house sparrows remaining the most-seen bird in gardens, numbers have reduced by more than two-thirds over 30 years. Research

suggests a lack of insects to feed young is contributing to declines. Homes For Wildlife participants are helping to combat this by encouraging insects back into their gardens.

Mr Bashford added: "We've made a fantastic start, but it's really important that more people get involved. Now is a great time to think longer-term about turning your garden into a haven for wildlife."

"The more people who sign up and take action, the bigger effect we will have. By taking simple wildlife-friendly steps in our gardens, collectively we will make a real difference for many Kent birds and other wildlife."

Don't fall prey to the scammers this Christmas

FIND yourself faced with a wrangle over your rights while shopping this festive season? Then help is at hand.

With the credit crunch set to change our buying habits, consumer support groups say they are ramping up their efforts to ensure we do not end up being ripped off this Christmas by making us all aware of our rights.

And with even some of the biggest retail names buckling under the pressure of an impending recession, shopping with confidence is crucial to reviving our local economies.

Consumer Direct South East, a Government-funded advice organisation, and Kent Trading Standards provide guidance on consumer rights and practical advice for problems with goods and traders.

The Consumer Direct website offers information and guidance on a variety of issues including online shopping, handling credit, avoiding scams and guarantees and contracts.

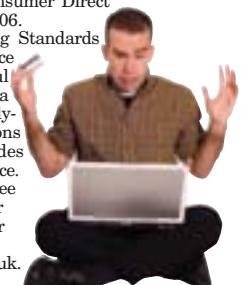
And if you want to only buy from companies who have proved themselves as fair and honest, then Trading Standards in the region has set up the Buy With Confidence scheme which gives access to a free directory of trusted traders.

Only businesses that pass strict tests are accepted on to the scheme.

As well as general advice and guidance on disagreements, Consumer Direct can also advise on making complaints; refer a case to a local Trading Standards service; and explain more about issues such as warranties, refunds and buying on credit. You can phone Consumer Direct on 08454 040506.

Kent Trading Standards offers an advice pack and useful leaflets and a list of frequently-asked questions which provides helpful guidance.

For details, see www.consumerdirect.gov.uk or www.tradingstandards.gov.uk.



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Mountain of salt is ready for our roads

BY ED HILL

YOU heard it here first – our roads will be prepared for the traditional snow white-out this winter.

At least that's the brave claim by Kent Highway Services (KHS), which says by harnessing precise forecasting, salt to tackle ice and snow on our roads "can now be laid at the right time, first time".

Which will be music to the ears of commuters who all too often find that the first flurry of snow causes chaos to the main roads in the county, prompting complaints over why preparations were not made in advance.

But this year 20,000 tonnes of salt has been stockpiled and 64 spreading vehicles across seven salting depots – including the new super-depot at Ashford – are ready to go out.

A Kent Highways spokesman said: "Treating the roads is based on detailed information and careful planning. When salting vehicles leave the depot, it's the final stage in a process that starts with watching the weather."

Data is gathered from 14 stations around the county. The information includes road temperature, air temperature and moisture levels. Five of the stations also have cameras to monitor what the roads look like at any given time.

The data is then gathered together by a meteorological company that merges it with a



PREPARED: More than 20,000 tonnes of salt and 64 spreading vehicles are ready to keep roads open in winter weather forecast dedicated to Kent's roads. The resulting information is issued to KHS three times a day, and this is turned into a Kent road weather forecast, giving details of any salting action as necessary.

The forecast categorises action into green, amber or red. Red alert means temperatures on the road will drop to freezing and the salting crews will usually go out. A green forecast requires no salting action, while amber alerts salting crews action could be necessary and a further update will be issued.

Kim Hills, head of community operations for KHS, said: "People think salting the roads is about rushing out when the first snowflake

falls, but there's a lot of planning involved to make sure we're delivering the service as effectively and efficiently as possible."

"While Kent residents are tucked up in bed, we're out and about laying salt at the right time to make sure Kent's roads are as safe as possible in winter weather."

A spokesman added: "In the event of really bad weather, the crews move into a shift pattern to work around the clock and, for extreme weather, snow-ploughs can be quickly fitted to the front of salting vehicles."

"KHS also maintains salt-bins around the county. These bins are currently being topped up with salt or replaced if damaged."

Family and friends give thanks for a 'wonderful' man

TRIBUTES were paid to former KCC leader Lord Sandy Bruce-Lockhart during a thanksgiving service at Canterbury Cathedral on Thursday.

Lord Bruce-Lockhart, who stepped down as council leader in 2005, died on August 14 after a long battle with cancer.

Hundreds of friends, family members, former colleagues and politicians gathered for the cathedral service.

Michael Howard, MP for Folkestone and Hythe, said Lord Bruce-Lockhart had a "remarkable" political career.

After the service, Labour MP Ruth Kelly described him as "absolutely wonderful", adding she had a good working relationship with him, in spite of their different political backgrounds. "He wanted to do what was right," she said.

Local government minister John Healey said: "He was a great figure in local government. In many ways he had so much more to offer to the country."

The service was led by the Very Rev Robert Willis, the Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, and there were readings by Harriet Creelman, Lord Bruce-Lockhart's niece, and old friend Chris Gosling.

Lord Bruce-Lockhart became a county councillor for Maidstone Rural East in 1989. He led KCC for eight years from 1997, was knighted in 2002, made chairman of the Local Government Association in 2004 and became a life peer in 2006.

In 2007 he was appointed chairman of English Heritage.



REMARKABLE: Lord Sandy Bruce-Lockhart

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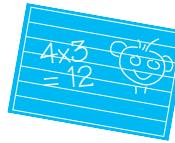
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Future laureates are published in new poetry book



RHYME AND REASON: The newly-published poets with their teacher, Gabi Magill (back row, second left)

ENGLISH students and teacher Gabi Magill have had work published in a Canterbury Festival book.

The team from Clarendon House Grammar School in Ramsgate impressed judges with their content, style and use of language in the schools poetry competition, where the standard for the year was described as "exceptionally high".

Poet Neil Stevens judged the best poems and selected them for the Canterbury Festival Schools Poetry Book 2008.

Stephanie Lewis was a gold medal-winner and wrote about the First World War; silver-medallists Amy Nash and Harnish Dharni wrote about getting old and loneliness.

Highly commended and also included in the book were Laura DeQuincey, Lauren Abel, Jessica Thomas and Ashleigh Abbott.

Certificates of commendation went to Charlotte Moss, Abigail Brown and Matilda Sutton who impressed the judges but were not published.

English and drama teacher Gabi Magill is published in the festival's book of poetry by adults with her bittersweet work Margate,

■ BY TOM BETTS

which contrasts the town today with her memories as a child and then as a parent bringing her children to the seaside.

In part of the poem she compares the heyday of Dreamland fun park with what is left. "Scenic Railway roller-coaster, unusual wooden structure. Ears pinned back for the motorized clank as she climbs the tracks to giddy height, what delights! Then the rush, make it stop, I'm gonna be sick." Now all that's left is a funeral pyre."

She ends her work with a look to the town's future of "excitement and furore" with the controversial proposal of the Turner Contemporary art gallery at the town's historic harbour.

She added: "I'm pleased for the girls whose excellent efforts have been recognised as among the best entries from around Kent and beyond for the festival poetry book."

"I am also pleased my poem was selected. Margate evokes so many conflicting and contrasting images."

BREAK TIME

A buzz of wildlife excitement

A PLOT of wasteland next to Ramsgate's Marlowe Academy could be turned into a nature reserve as part of the academy's Green Crusaders project.

The project, set up by science teacher Toni Young, aims to keep the land as wild as possible and to add to it a pond, an aviary, plants to attract insects – particularly bees – and a home for small pets such as rabbits, guinea pigs and tortoises.

Businesses have been asked to sponsor the project with help, equipment or cash. It is hoped work can start before Christmas.

The first firm to respond to the plea is Broadstairs-based company Fujifilm Sericol – one of the leading employers in Thanet. It has donated £150.

Explaining the reasoning behind the

project, Ms Young said: "The idea is to teach pupils how to care for animals – by taking ownership of the more cute and cuddly ones – and to teach them about conservation and going green."

Science and other lessons would also centre on the project.

She added: "In Key Stage 3 lessons it would be used to cover issues such as habitats, feeding relationships, differences between and within species, ecosystems, pollination, effects of diseases and sampling techniques for catching animals for data collection – particularly pond-life."

Howletts Zoo has offered to give students two talks about conservation, while a bee-keeper has offered to talk to students about his work.

Youngsters re-create Bible stories

A MURAL created by parents and children has pride of place at St Peter's school hall.

Organised with the Kent Adult Education Service, it was designed, drawn and painted to resemble a stained-glass window with the theme of St Peter's Bible stories.

Head-teacher Sharon Irvine said: "It is a fabulous example of creative collaboration between parents and pupils, and it forms part of our family learning projects."

"It took around six weeks to create and complete and is a colourful addition to the school hall."

Meanwhile, pupils have created a collage of life around St Peter's school and it is also on display.

The new parish priest of St Peter-in-Thanet, Rev John Richardson, is to visit the school to see the creative work of the parents and children first-hand.

SEND your school news and pictures to yourthanet@kosmedia.co.uk. You can also upload your own video clips of events on to www.yourkenttv.co.uk

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yourthanetblogger

Tory councillor Simon Moores ponders the imminent downfall of a great British institution – Woolworths

With Woolies on the brink, can our high streets survive?

THE wonder of Woolies is no more! Opening in 1909, Woolworths was not only an icon of the British high street, it frequently defined it.

Affordable shopping at its best, where shoppers went to pick'n'mix and, of course, to watch the pennies.

Saddled with an enormous debt and a crumbling business model, Woolworths was an inevitable victim of the credit crisis.

With it go 30,000 jobs and millions of customers, frequently from a section of society that couldn't afford – or was unable – to drive and shop at the brighter out-of-town shopping malls.

The 800 stores across the country are set to close after Christmas, and for Thanet the loss of its high-street presence is a small catastrophe, both in jobs lost to the local economy and the impact it will have on the efforts to regenerate our towns.

I had been worrying for some weeks that the business would collapse under the weight of its debts and had already raised the possibility

in conversation. But the speed of the announcement took me by surprise and now the already struggling Ramsgate and Margate high streets and Cliftonville's Northdown Road are looking like high-profile local victims of its demise.

Where the Government has been busy bailing out the banks, Woolworths was one small part of the same parcel of toxic debt that led to the global collapse of the credit system.

Government isn't so quick to rescue businesses and, perhaps more importantly, this particular government hasn't been quick to help them either, with the system of business rates on empty properties creating problems for business and local council landlords alike.

If the Government appears to be wringing its hands while businesses like MFI and Woolworths collapse, at the same time I read the letters in this paper and others.

"The council should do this" and "the council should do that" from readers who sincerely believe their council tax should be spent, like a magic wand, to support struggling local businesses without realising that a council's job is to provide services with what little money that

it has left, year on year. Business and consumer confidence is at rock bottom and there are doubts that the VAT cut will tempt cash-strapped consumers back into the shops.

Not just in Thanet, but in towns across the UK, the writing is firmly on the wall for the great British high street, unable to compete effectively against the attractions of internet shopping or, in our case, Westwood Cross.

But that's what people want – it's called choice and they vote with their feet.

The high street, faced by competition from an out-of-town shopping mall, simply lacks competitive advantage – unless you happen to be part of a captive local audience, without transport or an eBay account.

Woolies survived the Great Depression, but it's looking like it might not last the crash of 2008.

The death of the high street has been predicted before and proved wrong many times.

But perhaps this time we need to ask if it really is true – and ponder what should replace it in the fast-changing 21st-century shopping environment.

GET IN TOUCH...

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Dave Mairs, on **01303 817022**, or email

him on the details above. If you want to be the next Thanet blogger, then all you have to do is submit an article to us (of about 550 words) and email it to the editor.

And don't forget, for all the latest news and video from your town, log on to

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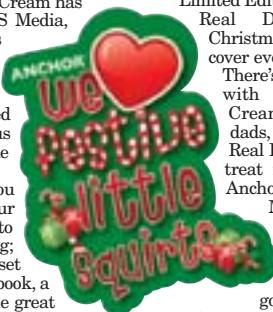
WIN Get festively fruity with Anchor

TIS the season to eat, drink and be merry, and here's a great way to get started.

Anchor Real Dairy Cream has teamed up with KOS Media, publishers of this newspaper, to give one lucky reader the chance to win everything they need to make some delicious fruity treats over the festive season.

You'll have all you need for you and your festive little squirts to get cooking, including: a complete baking set for kids, a kid's cook book, a smoothie maker, some great festive jelly moulds, plus some aprons so you and the kids can get as creative as you like with all your favourite fruits.

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Limited Edition flavours of Anchor Real Dairy Cream this Christmas, just the thing to cover everyone's taste.

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Mousse, the perfect

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To enter, simply answer the question below and send your entry on a postcard along with your e-mail address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to Anchor Comp, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent, TN25 6SR. The closing date is December 12, 2008.

Question: Which flavour of Anchor Real Dairy Cream will be a favourite with dads this Christmas?

- a) Anchor Extra Thick with Brandy Real Dairy Cream
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- c) Anchor Chocolate Flavour Mousse

For more fruity recipe ideas to try with your festive little squirts see www.anchorsquirtymoments.co.uk.

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TALK TIME

IAN DOVEY

Ian Dovey is both secretary and a coach at Margate Cricket Club. Here he talks about the work that the club does in and around the community



How long has MCC been established?

Margate Cricket Club was formed in 1930 from members of Cliftonville Hockey Club. A Cliftonville CC existed, so they called themselves Margate CC.

MCC was groundless until it leased Tivoli Meadow on Hartsdown Road in 1996, building the clubhouse.

Starting from one senior team and two youth sides, it now has senior teams in four leagues, a ladies' team and a girls' team (the only ones in Thanet), league teams at under-15, under-13 and under-11s, and two under-nine teams playing fun tournaments. MCC runs open-to-all sessions for youngsters year-round.

How did you get involved with the club?

Ten years ago, when I was 50, my son, Alex, tried cricket (and skateboarding). I took him to MCC's ground when he was 11. He now plays for MCC first team – and still skateboards.

I took Levels One and Two England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) qualifications. My coaching work includes the club's open sessions, school sessions and organising the recent free cricket in Dane Park, Margate.

Does the club have many young members and how do you encourage more to play cricket?

We have about 60 members from five to 15 years old, plus 25 seniors. We are a community club that welcomes everyone and always looks to expand.

This winter I will be running MCC's Monday evening sessions for five-year-olds upwards at Hartsdown Technology College and Thanet Youth Cricket's Saturday morning beginners' cricket at the Marlowe Academy.

MCC recently gained 'ClubMark' status, recognising that the club is properly run with a thriving youth set-up.

I'm very proud of that and it's due to a great bunch of volunteers who put a lot of effort in to make it all happen.

YOUR LETTERS

Sorry, but the sums really don't add up



COSTLY: Margate's proposed Turner Centre

Fingers crossed for the Turner Contemporary being a success, says Cllr Clive Hart (last week's Yourthanet).

Is that the best suggestion he can offer us?

The Turner Sea Elephant, a hideously ugly lump of a building judging by the drawings and models, will fit as aesthetically on to Margate's seafront as a hairy wart on Kylie Minogue's dinky nose.

Cllr Hart says that Kent County Council and Thanet District Council are relying on the revenue from the Rendezvous car park to help pay for the £2 million annual running costs of the gallery.

Really? And how much will that generate each year?

Maybe £100,000? So where is the other £1.9m coming from?

I wish there was some way we could hold every district and county councillor who voted for this eyesore financially liable for its eventual failure.

Yet these councillors are the self-same incontinent protectors of the public purse who constantly sneer at the comparatively minuscule cost of Ramsgate's Town Council.

Gerry O'Donnell
Ramsgate

It's a question of speed, not money

Well, the safety bogs have revealed what they have in mind for our transport systems.

Our government should advertise in the following manner: "Brit jobs for foreigners – lousy drivers welcome."

Reported just recently, it's back to normal with blind politicians and ignorance ruling the roads.

How many times must one tolerate such ill-conceived hypocrisy in this land?

It's bad enough with the Association of Chief Police Officers, and some chiefs in particular, waffling about motorcycles that do 200mph.

Let alone Minister Hoorn – or does H become a G? Or the procedural 'consultancy' meaning 'approved', stinging drivers and riders using the new 'time-lapse or average speed' cameras supposedly up to 30 miles apart.

Yet he and ACPO have missed a fact, not least with the go-slow brigade.

Drivers who meander at 30mph-40mph in 50mph-60mph zones are just as guilty – in fact they create greater dangers on our roads than those doing 80mph on the motorway.

It was always a lesson learned on L-plates, but then today's teachers leave a lot to be desired.

Note that going slow is just as illegal and irresponsible as being fast. Speed has saved more lives than it's ever taken.

Facts are facts and it's been proven by the Government's own establishments that cameras do little to nothing when it comes to accidents.

However, it has been proven that cameras do and can cause accidents.

There is a classic statement often spouted when civilians are killed: 'collateral damage'.

Well, it's a fact of life, whether we like it or not, on our roads and indeed every road in the world.

We know it's hard to lose loved ones, but idiot drivers deserve no accolade. Especially when we have soldiers dying in unjustified wars.

The time has come for the police, Parliament, safety quangos and the like to gain something they have lost, namely common sense.

The proposals are basic money-spinners for the Government – and Gordon Brown will have to rip off many to get out of the economic mess he is part started.

But anyone who trusts this government must be happy to get ripped off – even if they must pay more for less at every turn.

Adrian Ottley
Birchington

Continually in the dark about airport

Strange how the only public Kent International Airport Consultative Committee (KIACC) meeting in a year is announced just seven days in advance.

And at a time when there is a huge spike in benzene levels.

Surely, after two years in the job, chairman Paul Twyman will want to create an ongoing calendar of meetings – all held in public rather than secret – to ensure proper scrutiny of airport operator Infratil.

To suggest, as he did in last week's Yourthanet, that payments by airlines for late flights and pollution are not fines but compensation is, of course, misleading.

A fine is intended to deter late flights and pollution.

Compensation is simply an extra landing charge by the cargo airlines built in to allow pollution and late flights... as we've seen repeatedly over the years.

And of course a \$1 billion corporation would surely agree that a DVD-player or a new set

of chairs for a village hall is hardly adequate compensation for the host of diseases so often prevalent around airports.

Will Mr Twyman, either as chairman or as a colleague of Thanet North MP Roger Gale and Canterbury MP and shadow aviation minister Julian Brazier, not prepare an invoice for proper compensation to our townsfolk?

If the UK operation won't pay, there's always head office in New Zealand.

Would £1m be adequate for the breaches of 2005-08? Or £5m?

It may be a small price for our town and Government planners, given Ostend cargo airport is only 20 miles away across the Channel.

Thank goodness the air traffic control tower logs all the flights and can be accessed via Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations.

Head of development services Brian White and chief executive Richard Samuel may want to reflect on how one of Europe's worst councils can help our townsfolk and councillors in future.

Mr Twyman, meanwhile, may want to hand back his chairman's salary for failing to control these obvious breaches.

Meanwhile, plans for a new asbestos factory or mercury-processing plant must be well in hand as Thanet council's cabinet storms into the 19th century.

Tim Garbutt
Ramsgate

Queens Lodge story blurred the truth

Having read comments in the November 11 edition of Yourthanet ('Pensioner can't bear to stay in her home'), some of which are misleading, I take this opportunity to correct mistakes.

I moved here in 2000. At this time the building housed a majority of Hillingdon council

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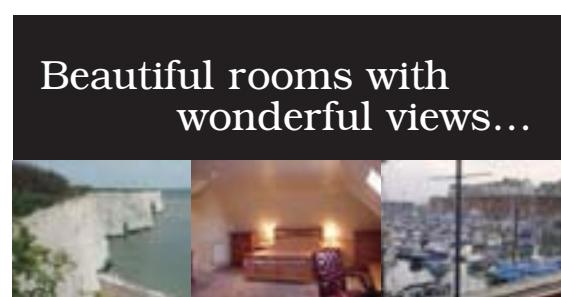
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tenants and a minority of leaseholders.

The impression given was that in 2007, or five months later, Hillingdon Homes placed unruly tenants.

The other complaints, such as stealing, I know nothing of, but Hillingdon Homes circulated each occupant to ascertain if a problem existed and as far as I know the result was negative.

The premises was originally stated to offer accommodation to other ages, which is not accepted by some individuals.

The impression given by the article is misleading as conditions here are much the same as any other flats, except that at the moment tenants' flats are being reconditioned, subjecting occupants to excessive unnecessary noise which the noise abatement department of Thanet council was unable to curtail as the contractors were acting legally.

H Thomas
Queens Lodge, Cliftonville

Free book is recipe for healthier living

With the cold winter weather many readers might feel in need of some warming comfort foods.

But many traditional comfort foods can be high in fat, which is bad news for the waistline.

If we are putting on weight, this can also have an impact on our cancer risk as scientists say that, after not smoking, maintaining a healthy weight is the most important thing you can do for cancer prevention.

Traditional comfort foods can be

high in salt, too, and having too much salt also probably increases your risk of stomach cancer.

At World Cancer Research Fund we have put together a Healthy Comfort Foods recipe booklet, proving that you can transform your favourite comfort foods into nutritious and tasty feasts.

We are offering the booklet for free to the first 100 readers who call 020 7343 4205 and quote 'media'.

To find out more about WCRF and read more of our recipes, visit www.wcrf-uk.org/recipes.

Lisa Cooney
World Cancer Research Fund

Lobby your MP to stop 'status' dog problem

I am writing about the problem of status dogs – an issue on which the RSPCA is campaigning.

Dogs used as weapons are becoming increasingly popular in urban gangs. Indeed, the RSPCA saw a 15-fold increase in the number of complaints about dogfighting between 2004-2007.

Such dogs are also used to intimidate, fight or attack people and other animals (often other dogs and cats) and this has a huge impact on local communities.

Now, the society is urging readers to lobby their MP and ask them to put their name forward for the Private Members Bill ballot, taking place on December 11.

Alternatively you can go the website www.giveanimalsavoice.org.uk for more information.

It will just take a few minutes, but with enough support this could be the start in creating legislation to

tackle this horrific trend. Current legislation is failing enforcers, dog-owners and the dogs themselves.

RSPCA animal centres are bulging with unwanted 'status' dogs such as bull breeds and Staffordshire bull terrier-crosses.

We need to act now to alleviate this growing crisis.

Paul Stilgoe,
RSPCA South East

Making a stand for the common people

A FEW weeks ago when crossing Queen's Road in Broadstairs I stumbled on a considerable groove worn in the road by the buses pulling up at the bus stop by NatWest Bank.

An email to Kent Highways followed and I am pleased to report that the road surface was repaired quickly before some less sure-footed person was injured.

I can only assume the Thanet councillors representing Broadstairs don't walk their wards very often as the need to get this road repaired was glaringly obvious to anyone familiar with the area.

While I am happy to contact the authorities to get things done, I feel our elected representatives should be more proactive.

That is one of the reasons I am standing for Kent County Council as a Labour candidate in 2009 – to ensure people's concerns are dealt with quickly and efficiently.

I think all our councillors should leave their cars behind and get their walking shoes on to see where we council taxpayers are losing out.

Jenny Matterface
Broadstairs

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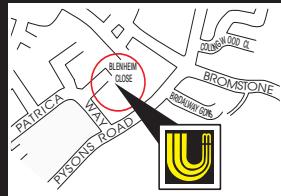
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CHRISTMAS CHEER: The streets of Rochester will come alive as the town celebrates the festive period with entertainment from Dickensian times

A Dickens of a Christmas

Town to celebrate author during festive period

JOURNEY back in time and see the festive season through the eyes of a great writer with Rochester's Dickensian Christmas.

This weekend the town will be transporting visitors back to the 1800s for a traditional celebration of Christmas. Rochester will be alive with family entertainment and festivity from Dickens's day, proving the perfect antidote to modern-day stresses and worries.

The streets that Dickens explored as a boy will be populated with entertainers and musicians. Visitors will also have the chance to join in with favourite Christmas carols and enjoy a guaranteed snowfall.

The festival begins on Friday (December 5) with the Grand Mistletoe Ball at the Corn Exchange.

A three-course meal will be followed by music from The Donn Barcott Band. Tickets cost £24; to book, phone 01795 843317.

On Saturday, pick up some bargain Christmas gifts from Bespoke 2008 in The Prince's Hall at the Corn Exchange. Running from 10.30am to 4.30pm, the free event showcases the best of Medway's talented designers and makers.

Father Christmas will be in residence at Rochester Castle Gardens from 11am to 4pm both days, while at 3pm on Saturday Dickens's great-



ROCHESTER'S DICKENSIAN CHRISTMAS

Saturday and Sunday, December 6-7
Various venues in Rochester

great-grandson Gerald will perform his acclaimed one-man interpretation of A Christmas Carol at The Queens Hall.

Ashley Davis will host the sumptuous Bull Dinner at 7.30pm at the Royal Victoria and Bull Hotel and at the same time the Christmas Concert With A Twist will be held at St Margaret's Church with organist Gavin Williams and friends.

The fun continues on Sunday with John Bromley-Davenport QC's adaptation of A Christmas Carol in the cathedral nave at 1pm.

Experience some traditional entertainment at 2pm when The Fabulous FezHeads, England's premier sand dance vaudevillian illusionists, will baffle and amuse the audience at The Queens Hall.

On both days The Seven Poor Travellers' Procession will set off from the Royal Victoria and Bull Hotel at 11am to the Six Poor Travellers' House, in time for the carving of the Christmas turkey. At noon, Mayor of Medway Cllr David Carr will lead a procession of Dickens characters and other participants from the junction of High Street and Almon Place to Rochester Castle Gardens.

The candlelit parade sets out from the same spot at 4.45pm, followed by an open-air carol concert overlooking Rochester Cathedral at 5pm. The BAE Systems Brass Band will lead a selection of carols, which will be enhanced by a guaranteed snowfall.

Extra entertainment will be taking place at Rochester Castle Gardens both days, including a children's traditional funfair and a Christmas craft fair and there will be services taking place at the cathedral throughout the weekend. With a wealth of street entertainment and activities at other venues, it should be a spectacular start to the festive season.

A full programme can be downloaded at www.medway.gov.uk/dickensianchristmas, or phone Medway Visitor Information Centre on 01634 843666 for more details.

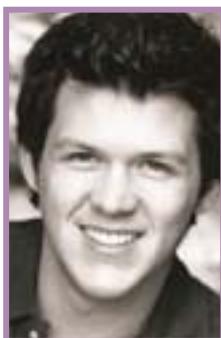
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ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES

Thursday, December 11, to Saturday, January 3
Theatre Royal Margate



A CHANCE discovery leads to a young man having to fend off a gang of villains in *Ali Baba And The Forty Thieves*.

Kent actor Alex Tomkins, 25, plays the title role in the Theatre Royal Margate's Christmas pantomime and he is looking forward to donning his harem trousers for the festive show.

"There's lots of singing and dancing and it's an uplifting sort of show," he said. "It has original music which is very panto-esque."

"I've done three or four pantomimes before and I just really like the way they can appeal to adults and children alike.

"There's something in it for everyone and it's a privilege

to be involved as an actor because usually you are doing something which is aimed at a particular audience. But with panto, that's not the case."

When *Ali Baba* stumbles across a gang's haul of treasure in a cave, he takes some of it home. But when his family find out about the loot, things start to get out of hand.

To book tickets, phone 0845 1301786 or 01227 787787. Or you can visit www.theatreroyalmargate.com.

THE FRATELLIS

Wednesday, December 10
Winter Gardens, Margate



SCOTTISH whirlwinds The Fratellis have conquered the music world and are back on the road again.

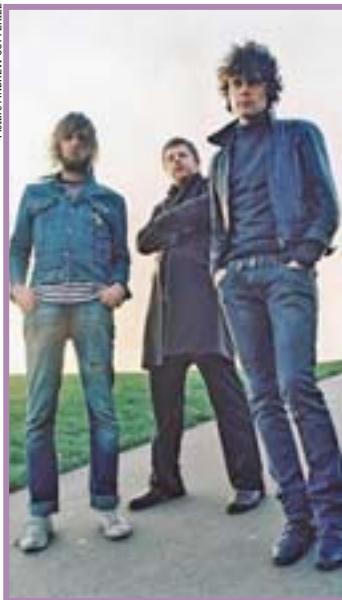
Formed in 2005, the trio soon became a musical sensation and sold more than a million copies of their debut album in the UK alone. Produced by Tony Hoffer, who has worked with Beck and Air, Costello Music put The Fratellis on the map and they have continued to expand on their early success.

Their biggest achievement so far was winning the Best British Breakthrough Award at last year's Brit Awards. It was voted for by listeners of Radio 1, so the band knew it was really making an impact with the people who mattered. They were also named 'best new band in Britain' by the NME.

With hits such as 'Creepin' Up The Backstairs', 'Whistle For The Choir' and the anthem 'Chelsea Dagger', the Glaswegians have brought a little glam rock and feel-good sound back to the contemporary pop scene.

The concert starts at 7.30pm and tickets cost £20. To book, phone the box office on 01843 292795/296111, or alternatively you can visit www.margatewintergardens.co.uk.

Picture ANDREW COTTERILL



HANSEL AND GRETEL

Tuesday, December 9, to
Tuesday, December 23,
Gulbenkian Theatre, Canterbury



DISCOVER whether hunger is stronger than love in the Gulbenkian Theatre's enchanting Christmas show.

The family production tells the story of Hansel and Gretel, the brother and sister who are abandoned in the woods by their starving father.

Unable to feed his family, the poor woodsmen gives in to his wife's demands and leaves his children to their fate in the dark forest.

After finding their way home the first time, the pair do not have as much luck the second time. Instead, they follow their noses to the heart of the woods, where both a sweet treat and a terrible witch await them.



With her taste for children on toast, will they be able to escape from the witch in time?

Presented by Lyngo Theatre, the show is a musical treat with lots of captivating songs, multi-role performances and striking imagery. Patrick Lynch, from CBBC's

Razzle Dazzle, stars as Hansel.

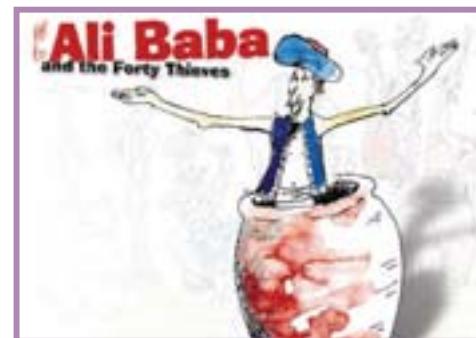
The family show is suitable for children aged four and above. Tickets cost £9 for adults, £7 for children and £35 for family/friends groups of five. To book, phone 01227 769075, or visit www.gulbenkiantheatre.co.uk.

Behind the scenes at the panto factory. Search 'evolution'



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THANET LEISURE

Big tunes and magical effects in pantomime

MARGATE Operatic Society will be performing its festive pantomime Babes In The Wood this week.

The family show will be staged at the Winter Gardens and combines big musical numbers, baffling illusions and great lighting to create an unforgettable festive experience.

Babes In The Wood runs from today to Sunday. Tickets cost £8/£7. Phone the box office on 01843 292795/296111, or visit www.margatewintergardens.co.uk.

Cracking entertainment to celebrate 25 years

GET ready to enjoy a Christmas cracker as the Granville Theatre stages its 25th annual variety show.

Starlite Entertainers present a special Christmas Cracker Variety Show of performers both past and present and Granville Theatre Arts.

The show will be at the Ramsgate theatre at 2.30pm and 7.30pm on Saturday. Tickets cost £6, concessions available. Phone the box office on 01843 591750.

Shell Grotto transforms into winter wonderland

CHILDREN can meet Father Christmas in a real magical grotto in Margate this month.

The Shell Grotto is hosting its eighth enchanting Christmas event, where children of all ages can meet the man himself and receive a festive gift.

There will also be unusual gift ideas on offer in the shop and warming refreshments available in the cafe.

Santa's Grotto runs from noon to 4pm every weekend until Sunday, December 21. Admission costs £5.50 per child. Find out more at www.shellgrotto.co.uk.

Players come together with seasonal songs

GET into the festive spirit with the latest production by the St Peters Players.

Sing A Song Of Christmas will be performed at St Peter's Memorial Hall in High Street, St Peter's, on Tuesday and Wednesday next week, at 7.30pm. Admission is £3, including tea and a mince pie.

Tickets are on the door, from Pets Pantry, High Street, or from the Thursday coffee morning at the Memorial Hall.

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On a bed of mixed leaves with a lemon pepper mayonnaise

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In a rich red wine & bacon sauce

Baked Loin of Cod

In a prawn & chive sauce

Chef's Own Steamed Apple & Mint Sponge Pudding

Served with custard

Christmas Pudding

Served with cream

Haagen Dazs Baileys Ice Cream

Christmas Yule Log

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Roast Topside of Kentish Beef

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With lentils

Grilled Fillet of Plaice

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Served with peaches & cranberry

Traditional Christmas Pudding

With brandy sauce

Banoffee Pie

Served with vanilla ice cream

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For more information or to reserve a bike, see www.halfords.com, or visit your nearest store at Westwood.

Wrap up warm with big saving on gowns

WRAP up on those cold winter nights with dressing gowns from La Senza.

The Fremlin Walk store is offering a range of designs with prices starting at £18. Plain hooded robes can be picked up for £18, or go for a full-length dressing gown at £30.

For those special occasions, a black-glitter knit cardigan is £25 and for the festive season a reindeer-design shawl short robe is £18.

To see the selection on offer, you can visit www.lasenza.co.uk.

Stun in this startlingly scarlet party outfit

NEW Look is offering girls the perfect outfits to look good this Christmas.

One that will make you turn heads is the red georgette prom-dress priced at just £25. Team this with red satin bow-stilettos for £15, reduced from £25, a faceted rectangle ring for £4 and a faceted disco bangle for £4.

To see more, visit www.newlook.co.uk, or visit your nearest store in Margate High Street, Ramsgate High Street or Westwood Cross shopping centre.

Buy two decorations and get the third free

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Big is beautiful, as the new party range shows

HEAD down to Evans and check out the new partywear selection.

Black sleeveless prom dresses are £60, grey tie-dye print dresses are £55 and black sleeveless maxi dresses are £50.

Shoppers can pick up a brown leopard-print boob-tube for £25, while a sequin-trimmed crotchet bolero is now £25, down from £35.

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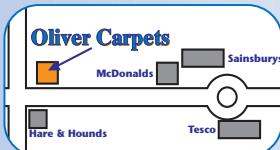
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BODY OF LIES (15)



A dramatic thriller starring Leonardo DiCaprio as a CIA agent who has tracked a suspected terrorist in Jordan. Now he must trust those he feels will deceive him to get the job done. Also starring Russell Crowe and directed by Ridley Scott, Body Of Lies is a tense thriller.

CHOKE (18)



From maverick author Chuck Palahniuk (Fight Club) and new writer-director Clark Gregg comes the subversively comedic tale of Victor Mancini, con artist, sex addict, colonial village re-enactor, angst-filled son, serial restaurant choker – and unsuspecting romantic anti-hero for our unsettling times.

Angelina's change of heart

■ BY JULIA HUNT
AND KATE WHITING

ANGELINA Jolie is one of the most distinguished actresses of her generation.

She embodies the grace and beauty of the old-style Hollywood belles as well as being an earth mother to her six children and devoted partner of actor Brad Pitt.

The 33-year-old seems to play each role – in life and on the big screen – with deft aplomb, ensuring that what is private remains private, but giving her all to each character she plays.

She becomes so embroiled in each performance, in fact, that when she first read the script for her latest role, as single mother Christine Collins in *Changeling*, she turned it down.

Upsetting

"When I read the script, I could not put it down and then I said 'No'. Immediately, I did not want to go near this project because it was too upsetting."

"But then I couldn't stop talking about her," Angelina, elegant in grey, explains.

"I found myself sitting with people and wanting them to know about this extraordinary woman that you wouldn't believe what happened to her and what these people did to her."

Changeling, the latest work from legendary actor-turned-director Clint Eastwood, tells the story of Christine, whose son Walter disappears without a trace in 1928 Los Angeles.

Five months later, a child who claims to be her son is returned by police, who are keen to win credit for a job well done.

Dazzled by flashbulbs and overwhelmed by reporters, Christine agrees to take the boy home, even



RETHINK: Angelina Jolie first turned down the role of Christine Collins in *Changeling* though she knows it is not her son.

Her campaign to find the real Walter continues, but in Prohibition-era LA, women don't stand up to the system and she is sent to a mental institution.

Christine's long battle against the corrupt system eventually changed the course of the city's history.

"I found it very inspiring in the end," Angelina continues.

"It became a story about democracy in action, a story about justice, about suffering a great loss

and fighting through it and making a change for the future, for other people and questioning government and the police.

"Christine had to walk a very fine line and then, when she did speak out, they locked her in an institution, so she had this real struggle to try to behave with these corrupt people."

Angelina gave birth to twins in July this year, and they are apparently asleep in her room at London's Claridge's when we

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meet. Knox and Vivienne are the latest additions to her and Brad's brood but were still just a glint in their mother's eye while she was filming.

The actress says that her other children – Maddox, seven, Pax, four, Zahara, two – who were all adopted – and two-year-old Shiloh, her first child with Brad, were a comfort to her during the harrowing shoot.

"I had my kids with me as much as possible at lunch and after doing a day at work I would run home," she reveals.

"I just wanted to be silly. It was so emotional that I found myself being really goofy. I was so happy that I knew where my kids were and they were OK."

For an actress at the top of her game, it seems unusual, then, that Angelina plans to bow out of the business. But her family clearly comes first.

"I'm not making some big retirement announcement, but I have a big family and I have a lot of responsibility at home."

"Maybe I'll make a film once a year and then maybe once every two years, and then maybe eventually I'll stop."

 **CHANGELING**
Certificate 15

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YOUR TV REVIEW

 **SURVIVORS**
BBC One, 9pm, Tuesday

■ BY TOM BETTS

IF sales of stock in post-apocalyptic dramas were a viable business proposition, then business would be good.

Hard on the heels of well-executed zombie mash-up Dead Set – and before that the 28 Days films – comes Survivor, the BBC's stab at injecting a little bleakness into your week.

It's all here: the breakdown of society, looting, chaos, disbelieving stares into the distance and, best of all, a lot of good old-fashioned shouting.

But the more interesting slant on all this has been that, rather than zombies that want to devour whoever they come across en masse, it has been a killer virus snuffing out the citizens – although the name of it escapes me right now.

To be fair, though, it makes MRSA look like a slight sniffle, which is what you want, I guess, if the end of the world is indeed nigh.

If nothing else, it beats an evening in watching Britannia High.

The merits of this are that, firstly, it looks like someone has actually thought for more than two minutes about the casting of this one, unlike, say, Torchwood, which seemed to drag any fool off the street and offer them a starring role in return for a doughnut at the BBC canteen.

And secondly, the production is sharp and focused, with a clear goal in mind for this six-parter rather than the nailed-on certainties you so often come across with these types of 'Oh crap, everyone is pegging it' thing.

Freema Agyeman (or "the girl off Doctor Who", as she's more commonly known around my house) battles away as Jenny the primary school teacher



AXE TO GRIND: BBC has a real winner on its hands with the post-apocalyptic *Survivors*

with attitude who quickly realises she's standing at the top of a big downward spiral when the virus strikes.

Never has a heroine had such grief getting a bed in a hospital for a flatmate.

Poor girl must wonder how many out-of-the-world scenarios she has to endure, what with the Doc seeing more than his fair share.

Freema and the rest of the ensemble are soon fighting for survival as the bug spreads like wildfire and kills off more people than the last Rambo film.

As doom-laden romps go, the Beeb has scored here, and next year's remake of John Wyndham's classic Day Of The Triffids will have to be even more worthwhile.

Catch part four of *Survivors* on Tuesday.

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YOUR WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

BY RUSSELL GRANT



AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)

A PASSION packed love affair gives you a sexy glow that makes friends, family and fellow workers sit up and take notice. Nothing puts a spring in your step like love. An unexpected expense could force you to cancel arrangements, but you won't let it get you down for long.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762

TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21)

A BURNING desire to travel may prompt you to book a trip. If you're single, you're sure to find romance on this journey. You could be drawn to someone who is much older or younger than you. This age difference seems to enhance your relationship, not detract from it.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Taurus** 09067-531753

LEO (Jul 24-Aug 23)

YOUR job puts you in touch with some highly creative people. Being around writers, painters, or actors may inspire you to begin an art project. Your imagination is your most precious treasure. If you stick to this path, you might even be able to sell your work for a handsome profit.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Leo** 09067-531765

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)

YOU could get some good news regarding a female friend or relative. A fun night on the town will let you forget all of the frustrations that have been building for the past few weeks. An official from a humanitarian organisation may offer to write you a recommendation.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Scorpio** 09067-531759

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)

AN old friendship could blossom into new romance with very little encouragement. You're not sure why you've developed such a strong desire for the person in question. Perhaps you're getting tired of the people you usually fall for and fancy something a little different.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763

GEMINI (May 22-Jun 22)

MONEY from an inheritance or legal settlement gives you a chance to make home improvements. If you don't own a home, think about buying one. Although you hate being tied down it's usually a good idea to have a secure base. A close friend or partner could lose their job.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Gemini** 09067-531754

CANCER (Jun 23-Jul 23)

Someone close gives you the drive to go back to school. Learning a foreign language or taking up new technological skills will be stimulating and frustrating. Stick with it, all good things take time and perseverance. A legal decision could come as an utter surprise.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755

LIBRA (Sep 24-Oct 23)

HOME is where the heart is. Entertaining friends and family brings out the best in you. You're the type of host who is able to let go and have a good time after your guests arrive. That's probably why your parties are so successful. Resist the urge to tell a colleague what you really think.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Virgo** 09067-531757

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)

NORMALLY you don't care much about your personal presentation or what you wear, but this week you'll want to make a good impression on a potential employer. If you look the part of a professional, you'll be more likely to land a well paid position.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Sagittarius** 09067-531760

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20)

THIS is a great time for learning and studying. If you want to boost your qualification apply for a place on a training course now, while the stars are behind you. Complicated technology has a nasty way of breaking down just when you need it most. Be sure to back up your files.

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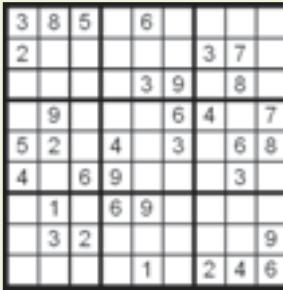
CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

No65

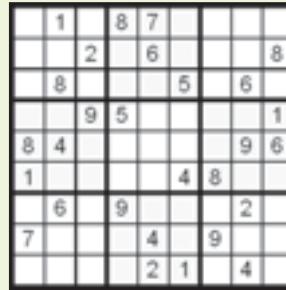
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Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9

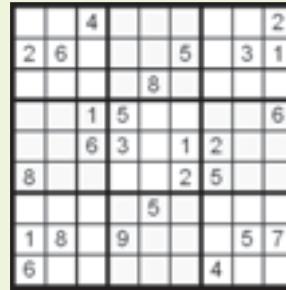
EASY



MEDIUM



HARD

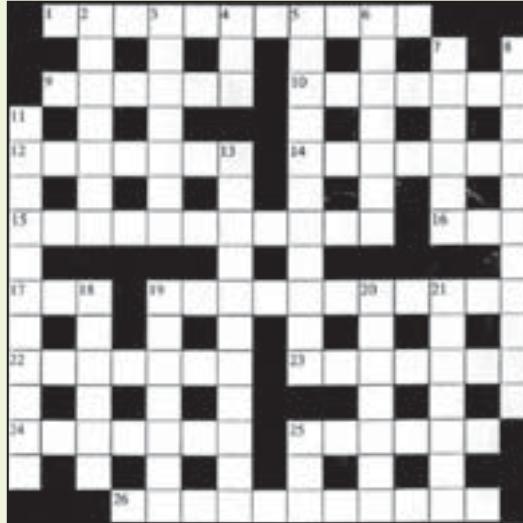


CRYPTIC CLUES

ACROSS

- 1 Prudish tract ladies removed (6-5)
- 9 Trip up giving a shout of pain when it has not been cultivated (6)
- 10 Eat another loaf or scone (7)
- 12 Get back to put the lid on again (7)
- 14 Resort to drugs singularly and be ruined (2,2,3)
- 15 Bar-room dart damaged cap (11)
- 16 Service long way back (1,1,1)
- 17 Title of man in middle of vice squad (3)
- 19 Arrangement by priest and choir before written records (11)
- 22 King entered vessel put in order (5,2)
- 23 Intellect prepared having fixed attitude (7)
- 24 Alan's replacing silver put into pastal (7)
- 25 Partly crazy, got ecstatic with cell (6)
- 26 Founding charitable organisation (11)
- DOWN
- 2 Melted tarmac runs under vehicle (7)
- 3 Matters been deposited by rivers (7)
- 4 Pull westwards (3)
- 5 Eye defect, one brand (11)
- 6 Previous one with lieutenant Edward had been placed in a position of respect (7)
- 7 Jay ruined spare porcelain (6)
- 8 Fierce cat, it destroyed document (11)
- 11 Urgent summons to action on the clarion? (7-4)
- 13 Tree from India? (6,5)
- 18 Feeling swell when at sea? (6)
- 19 Penny put a cloth on model (7)
- 20 Drunk performing inside before the end of the day (7)
- 21 Father leaves French city with German fellow to get Italian dish (7)
- 25 Fuzz, it covers spot (3)

SCRIBBLE HERE



QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- 1 Compatible (4-7)
- 9 Seized (6)
- 10 Flickering (7)
- 12 Aperture (7)
- 14 Racing (7)
- 15 Went ahead of one's turn (5-6)
- 16 Yea (3)
- 17 Ovum (3)
- 19 Youngster fond of pop-music (5-6)
- 22 Phoenix state (7)
- 23 Extremely reckless (7)
- 24 Old shoe fastening (7)
- 25 Smooth stone (6)
- 26 January 1st (3,5,3)

DOWN

- 2 Elusive (7)
- 3 Brown coal (7)
- 4 Astern (3)
- 5 Green pigment of plants (11)
- 6 Decorated with white fur (7)
- 7 Confirm the truth (6)
- 8 With a strong desire to act (5-6)
- 11 Capable of being overcome (11)
- 13 Luxuriantly (11)
- 18 Merrymaking (6)
- 19 Metrical foot (7)
- 20 Passenger-carrier (7)
- 21 Kneecap (7)
- 25 Vegetable (3)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS No64

EASY



MEDIUM



HARD

CRYPTIC SOLUTION No64

ACROSS: 1 Jingostic 6 Scow 9 Comet 10 Calm 11 Saki 13 Ladies-in-waiting 14 Radiance 16 Advice 18 Floppy 19 Shoulder 22 Religious orders 24 Lobe 25 Limb 26 Exist 27 Caga 28 Interstate. DOWN:

1 Jocular 2 Nomad 3 On the rampage

4 Succint 5 In-laws 7 Clarified 8 Wriggle

12 Hindquarters 15 Doodlebug 17 Chasuble

18 Foreleg 20 Rosette 21 Potion 23 Eliza.

19 Gondwana 23 Unite 24 Lobe 25 Pea

20 Gondwanaland 21 Unite 24 Lobe 25 Pea

21 Gondwanaland 22 Unite 24 Lobe 25 Pea

22 Arizona 23 Unite 24 Lobe 25 Pea

23 Gondwanaland 24 Lobe 25 Pea

24 Gondwanaland 25 Lobe 26 Pea

25 Gondwanaland 26 Lobe 27 Pea

26 Gondwanaland 27 Lobe 28 Pea

27 Gondwanaland 28 Lobe 29 Pea

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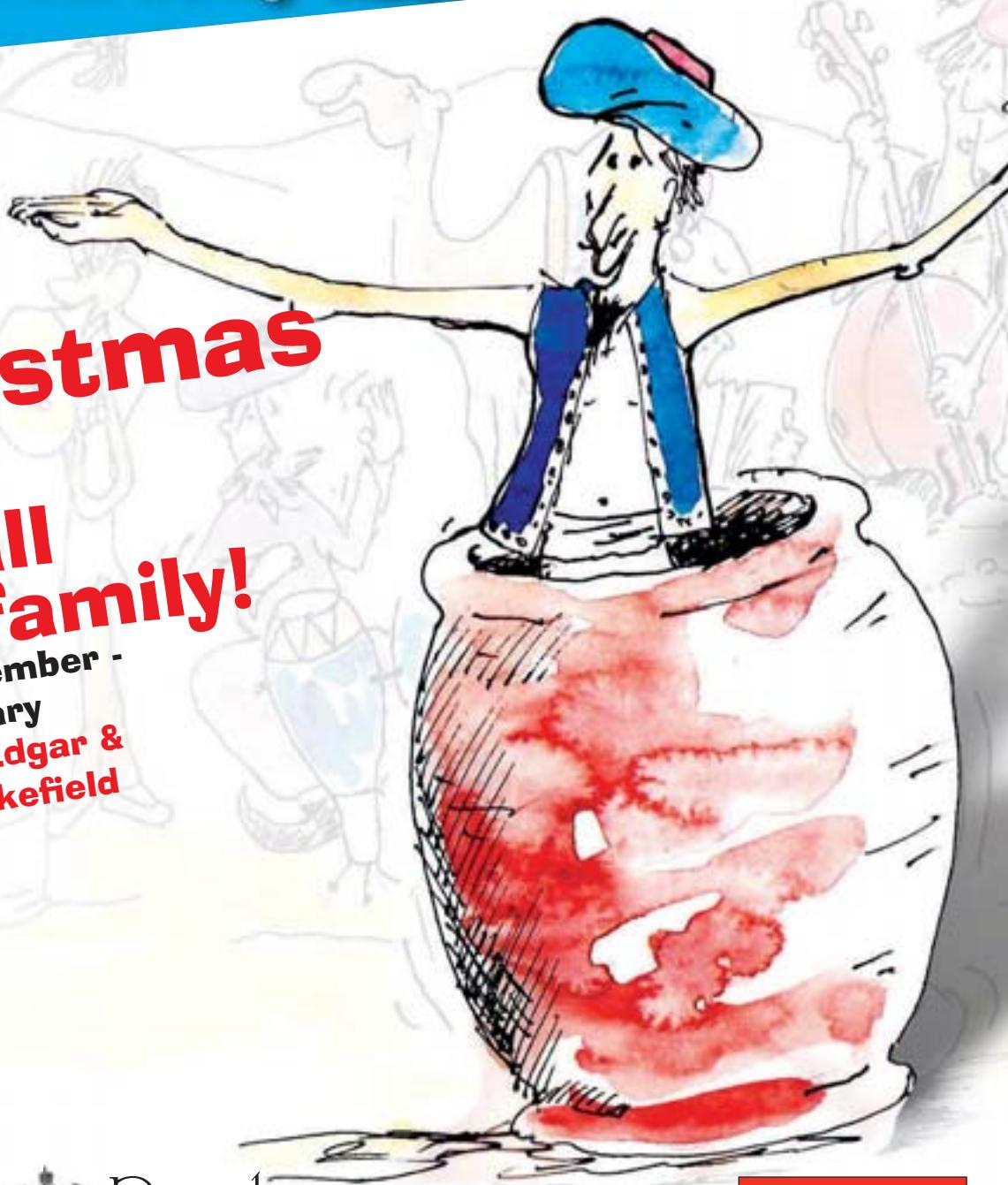
168 Gondwanaland 169 Lobe 170 Pea

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PROPERTY NEWS

Better news for the first-timers

THE head of a firm specialising in working with first-time buyers says the prospect for the market is improving.

Paul Holmes, chief executive of First-rung, claimed the falling prices of homes meant that more and more properties were coming within the reach of buyers.

However, he added that those who are looking to get on the housing ladder need to ensure their jobs are safe – and will need a larger deposit than previously of about 15 to 20 per cent.

“The good news is that while they [first-time buyers] are saving up for the deposit, house prices will continue to fall and come more in line with affordability and their expectations,” said Mr Holmes.

But he added the first stage for newcomers to the market would be them having to save “furiously” for the deposit because of its increase since the credit crunch took hold.



Agents demand action from top

ESTATE agents are calling on the Government to inject some life into the housing market by taking action to help the beleaguered business.

A poll by the National Association of Estate Agents showed 54 per cent had no confidence in the Government, and the body is calling for more interest rate cuts and a suspension of stamp duty.

The most recent findings when it comes to property analysis have prompted the call.

The number of sales per agent was up from six to seven – still historically low – and the number of first-time buyers taking a part in the market increased.

However, there was a seven per cent fall in the number of house-hunters on estate agents’ books to 196.

Prices dive slowing

THE rate at which house prices are falling eased in November, according to analysts.

The average cost of a home dropped by just 0.4 per cent during the month, compared with a slide of 1.3 per cent during October, according to the Nationwide Building Society.



HOPEFUL: As sellers are becoming more realistic about the new value of their homes, vendors and surveyors are anticipating a genuine improvement in market conditions

Reality check brings optimism to market

LEVELS of home-buying are still falling, but estate agents claim that they are seeing some early positive signs of recovery in the property market.

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors’ (Rics) market survey for October points to a slight upturn in prices – although that is from what was an extreme low.

The main factor found to be depressing prices was the large stock of unsold properties and limited numbers of buyers – but not a surge in forced selling, as a high number of recession-fuelled repossessions has yet to feed into the market.

The number of completed sales per surveyor was also down.

But the feeling of hope across the market is

■ BY NICK AMES

improving, with more analysts expecting an upturn than had a positive outlook at the start of the autumn.

On average the number of sales per surveyor fell from 11.5 to 10.9 – the lowest on record since 1978 and a fall of 53.6 per cent on a year ago.

Surveyors had on average 80.7 properties on their books.

Rics spokesman Ian Perry said: “The interest rate cut should certainly help support the market now lenders have agreed to pass on the reduction to borrowers.

“Even so, the general lack of mortgage finance remains a major blockage in the housing market for a large majority of would-be buyers.”

Along with the two per cent drop in interest rates in two months, surveyors did see some glimmer of hope.

Twenty per cent more chartered surveyors expect an upturn in sales over the next three months, a rise from just four per cent in September.

The increase in optimism is reflected in part by an increasing trend of vendors dropping asking prices, but it may also be a sign there are expectations of a jump in the number of repossessions.

“Many vendors have finally started to accept current market conditions and are dropping their asking prices to achieve a sale,” Mr Perry said.

“Sales should increase in the coming months as more and more sellers understand greater realism is the only way to make that long-desired move.”

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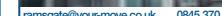
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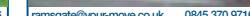
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- No upward chain

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Westgate

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- Two bedrooms
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 - Gardens

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- Three bedrooms
- No upward chain
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Birchington

- Detached cottage
- Two bedrooms
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Westbrook

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Birchington

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Fun-to-be-with, blonde female, 25, 5ft2, loves football! going out and staying in, looking for like-minded man to be my soulmate. Box 446494.

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Seeking fun, friendship, maybe more. WLMT fun man 25-30. Similar male, 26, brown hair/blue eyes, average build. Box 446226.

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CUDDLY FEMALE

32, 5ft3, brown hair, curly figure, enjoys having fun and a laugh, and WLMT nice, kind gent. Box 439402.

ATTENTION TALL WHITE GUY REQUIRED

Pretty black female, 32, tall, loves watching football, shopping, travel, seeking tall, white, loving male, 34-47, for LTR. Chatham. Box 437778.

FUN-LOVING FEMALE

Attractive, 31, 5ft4, size 12, dark hair with blonde highlights, taurine, with intelligent, professional, attractive guy, for a happy relationship. Tunbridge Wells. Box 308374.

LOVE TO LOVE YOU

Lovely female, 36, 5ft4, medium-large build, blonde hair, blue eyes, own house, loves walking, going out, the usual! Seeking male for long-term/serious relationship. Box 438102.

MEND A BROKEN HEART

Single mom, 37, fun-loving, been hurt in past, looking for nice, genuine guy for hopeful happiness - no time wasters! Box 908053.

ON THE LOOKOUT FOR LOVE

37yr old female, 2 kids, slim, brown hair and eyes, 5ft2, looking for a caring, loving, honest and trusting male to be my someone special. Box 446552.

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Good looking woman, 37, 5ft2, brown hair/eyes, 3 kids. Looking for new friends, and hopefully someone special. Box 446039.

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DEAL or NO DEAL? (IN DEAL)

Deal-based lady, 43, divorced, blonde, green eyes, 5ft10, likes going out, pubs, clubs, cinema, shopping, going to the beach and all sports events. Box 446221.

WHITE ROSES

Very attractive female, 42, slim, green eyes, high cheek bones, wicked SOH! Likes to make people laugh, seeking intelligent, well-mannered, kind man. Box 446521.

BORN TO MAKE YOU HAPPY

Caring, lovely lady, 42, genuine, short brown hair, lacks confidence! seeking loyal, gentle person, someone special who can spark back into my life. Box 885761.

HERE WE ARE

Easygoing female, 45, self-employed hairdresser, likes theatre, restaurants, socialising, sofa cuddles, seeking loyal, loving, caring male for good times and more. Box 446472.

COULD IT BE YOU?

Hi I'm 44, slim, 5ft8, love nights out, socialising, looking for friendship and hopefully more later on. Box 889800.

NOTHING VENTURED...

New to this, I'm a 53yr old woman, seeking loving, tactile man. I enjoy walks, countryside, having fun, nights in and out. Box 446282.

SEEING THROUGH THE SHYNESS

Attractive female, 53, intelligent, kind, funny, non-smoking, WLMT nice, kind, normal male 50-60, for theatre, laughs and more. Box 446383.

MAKE ME LAUGH

Fun extrovert person, 45, likes cinema, going out, socialising, seeking loyal, caring male for good times and more. Box 446470.

ARE YOU MY BOND? JAMES BOND?

Kind, caring, attractive lady, young, 53, 5ft7, short brown hair, blue eyes, seeking a male for potential romance. Box 446295.

BLONDE AMBITION

Attractive blonde female, 46, WLMT a caring, gentle and loving gentleman. Box 446014.

EVERLASTING LOVE

Beautiful blonde female, 46, WLMT a caring, gentle and loving gentleman. Box 446407.

ETERNALLY YOURS

Easygoing woman, likes most things in life; country walks, films, cinema, cooking, going out, socialising, seeking tall, good-looking, easygoing male for that right male. TLC. Box 445407.

SEEKING SOULMATE

Gorgeous slim attractive young-looking female, 54, active, wicked SOH, 5ft5, blue eyes, sociable, loves music, dancing, travelling, seeking warm, sincere man for genuine companionship. Box 446533.

WELL... SEE

Blonde hair/blue eyes, 5ft5, slim build, looking for friendship, maybe more. I'm a nice woman, 47, seeking good male for friendship, possibly more. Box 446534.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

READ ALL ABOUT IT!

African lady, 58, likes reading, current affairs and travelling, WLMT an outgoing, fun-loving and honest male to share the rest of my life with. Box 445122.

SANDY SKEE DANNY

Slim, petite Sandy, 46, brown hair, green eyes, no ties, loves socialising, eating out etc. GSOH, seeking trustworthy, honest man for partnership and mutual affection. Box 440100.

LADY WHAT HAPPENS

Laid-back single female, very bubbly, outgoing and intelligent, 43, enjoys social life, drinks, films, cinema, looking to start afresh with someone new, easygoing and life-loving. Box 446102.

LOVELY JOSEPHINE

Passionate and fun-loving 43yr old female, enjoys clubbing, meals out and cooking. WLMT a male to share evenings with. Box 445258.

ATTRACTIVE

Professional female, 43, enjoys dancing, walking, running, cooking, WLMT intelligent professional male, who can hold a good conversation, for a relationship. Box 444282.

LOVING, CARING & HONEST

Hard working single mum, young 44yr old, 5ft5, medium build, enjoys eating out, films, cinema and walks. WLMT a caring and genuine male for friend/relationship. Box 444283.

INTERESTED? GIVE ME A CALL

Homely traditional lady, 44, 5ft8, slim-medium build, non-smoker, love animals, my dog, walks along the harbour, country pub, WLMT an outgoing, friendly and honest male for a relationship. Box 446277.

WHERE R U?

Cheerful, honest, popular blonde, 50s old, 5ft2, slim build, looking to find an honest, loyal man that can make me happy again. Box 887347.

BIG DEEPER

Large, friendly female, 49, likes walks, running, nights out, seeking genuine, friendly male, 45-55. Dover Box 435441.

ARE YOU MY MR RIGHT?

Independent, honest, caring and genuine female, 44, 5ft6, medium build, GSOH, likes socialising, travelling, WLMT a genuine and honest male for friend/ship, companionship, maybe a LTR. Box 887442.

NICE TO MEET YOU

I'm Nina, 40, single mum, looking to meet a single dad, single dad, male for friendship and more. Box 446097.

COME ON OVER

Divorced female, 40, likes fishing, swimming, walking and eating out, WLMT young man, for friendship and more. Box 446097.

TOO MUCH TO ASK?

Genuine female, 41, 5ft3, Brunette, brown eyes, medium build, enjoys meals out, music etc, seeks male, 38-42, for romance. Box 155275.

THE HOME LIFE

Honest, caring female, 40, friendly and tactile and honest. I'm black African, 41, 5ft2, medium build, and would like to meet a nice person. Box 446097.

YOU'LL SMILE IF YOU DIAL

Bubbly 40 yr old female, enjoys beaches, pubs, clubs, WLMT a like-minded, caring male to share fun times with. Box 435102.

Just text

KOS to 81188

Charges: 35p each message you send. Forwarded messages and requested matches: 75p inc VAT.

Over 18s only. To cancel send STOP to 81188. For help call 0871 220 9188 - 10p/min all times. gwave, London N7 9AH. ©2008 gwave Ltd

LOVING & HAPPY-GO-LUCKY

Jovial, caring female, 51, 5'3", brown hair, hazel eyes, own business, with nice, tall, good looking gent for laughter, life and love. Box 926614.

COULD IT BE YOU?

Hi I'm 44, slim, 5ft8, love nights out, socialising, looking for friendship and hopefully more later on. Box 889800.

HERE WE ARE

Easygoing female, 45, self-employed hairdresser, likes theatre, restaurants, socialising, seeking a male for good times and more. Box 446282.

COULD IT BE YOU?

New to this, I'm a 53yr old woman, seeking loving, tactile man. I enjoy walks, countryside, having fun, nights in and out. Box 446282.

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New to this, I'm a 53yr old woman, seeking loving, tactile man. I enjoy walks, countryside, having fun, nights in and out. Box 446282.

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MAKE ME LAUGH

Fun extrovert person, 45, likes cinema, going out, socialising, seeking a male for good times and more. Box 446470.

ARE YOU MY BOND? JAMES BOND?

Kind, caring, attractive lady, young, 51, 5ft7, short brown hair, blue eyes, seeking a male for potential romance. Box 446295.

BLONDE AMBITION

Attractive blonde female, 46, WLMT a caring, gentle and loving gentleman. Box 446014.

EVERLASTING LOVE

Beautiful blonde female, 46, WLMT a caring, gentle and loving gentleman. Box 446014.

ETERNALLY YOURS

Attractive female, 54, active, wicked SOH, 5ft5, blue eyes, seeking a male for potential romance. Box 446533.

WELL... SEE

Blonde hair/blue eyes, 5ft5, slim, seeking a male for good times, pubs, clubs, cinema, dancing, theatre, walking, WLMT honest and trustworthy male for potential romance. Box 446533.

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COULD IT BE YOU?

New to this, I'm a 53yr old

MOTORS NEWS



Octavia's given facelift to make it even better

SKODA is launching a revised Octavia in January 2009, with an extensive facelift, bringing the Czech marque's best-seller into line with the rest of the current range.

Prices of the new Octavia represent an average increase of £473 for the Octavia Hatch and £478 for the Octavia Estate.

Changes include dynamic, sweeping headlights and complimentary front fog lights, new foldable door mirrors and body coloured bumpers and side mouldings, plus a new look interior with better steering wheels, sound systems and upholstery.

A new 1.4 TSI 122bhp engine replaces the current 1.6 FSI 115bhp and a 2.0 FSI 200bhp engine with DSG transmission will be introduced on the Octavia vRS.



Megane awarded Euro NCAP safety award

RENAULT'S latest Megane is its 11th model to earn the Euro NCAP five-star crash test rating.

Safety kit includes: twin side-impact sensors, an innovation that debuted with Laguna III; six airbags, including two twin-chamber thorax/groin airbags; the Renault System for Restraint and Protection, which combines pretensioners and load limiters with twin-stage dual-chamber adaptive front airbags; new-generation headrests; and ABS and Emergency Brake Distribution come as standard.

Car chief makes a call for Government lifeline

CARMAKERS need Government help to mitigate the impact of a downturn that "looks certain to get worse before it gets better", says a car chief.

It was "appropriate and necessary" for the Government to support the industry, added Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders president Graham Smith.

UK support was needed over and above the proposed 40 billion euro loan package which may soon be agreed by European finance ministers.

"We must collaborate nationally to compete internationally," said Mr Smith.

"We have asked for the finance divisions of vehicle manufacturers to get access to the same special liquidity arrangements as are now available to the banks. This access to finance and credit will help to boost demand and support our retail and distribution operations."



NO LAUGHING MATTER: Despite its silly name, Kia's Ceed is a serious threat to Ford, Vauxhall and Peugeot, particularly with the offer of a 100,000-mile/seven-year warranty

Sowing a Ceed of doubt in the minds of Ford & Co

KIA'S Ceed hints at why Ford, the original blue-collar brand, is trying to don a white collar.

OK, Ceed is one of the sillier model names on the market, but nobody is laughing at the headquarters of traditional mainstream carmakers like Ford, Vauxhall or Peugeot.

This five-door Ford Focus rival looks good, feels European, is priced keenly and comes with a seven-year/100,000-mile warranty – unprecedented and still unchallenged on the UK market.

It still cannot quite match the Ford dynamically, but the gap is not so great; the interior of the Kia concedes little, while some drivers might prefer its more pliant ride.

The big question for would-be owners though is: which engine? Ceed prices start at £11,270 in supermini territory rather than Focus class, but that buys the 1.4-litre petrol 'cooking' version.

Most buyers will opt instead for a 1.6 petrol (from £11,820) or 1.6 diesel (from £12,570), but it is still a tough call because the old argument that the petrol will be more refined is undermined by the fact that Kia's 1.6 unit is only

ROAD TEST

KIA Ceed

■ BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

average on that front, while its two diesel sisters are silky for this class.

You pay more upfront for the diesels though and need to be confident of covering enough miles to enable the greater economy to recoup that extra cash.

There is less to ponder about the interior; after a previous generation Kia Rio – the car it replaced effectively, since the current Rio is closer to supermini class – this is a quantum leap in quality and comfort, with a decent built-in CD/audio system and steering wheel controls now arranged in the normal indicators-to-the-left 'European' way.

Try to press on with the Ceed and the forgiving suspension allows it to pitch more than a Focus or Vauxhall Astra, though it is never lacks grip or tests confidence.

If this sounds like a deal-breaker though, try the more tautly arranged three-door Proceed version.

There is also a third family member worth considering – the spacious and practical Ceed SW estate.

No wonder Ford & Co are worried.

• Email newsdesk@yourkent.co.uk



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MORE ROAD TESTS
BY STEVE LOADER @
yourkentv.co.uk**

Need a new car? Then visit www.carsforkent.co.uk



USED CAR ROUND-UP: OUR PICK FROM A KEY SECTOR

FIAT MULTIPLA



EARNING top marks with the motoring press for originality when it arrived in 2000, the original Multipla proved simply too wacky looking to generate the sales it deserved. A facelift made it more visually acceptable and its practical qualities began to shine. Relatively compact, it allows six to be seated comfortably and there is plenty of stowage space.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

DISTINCTIVE MIDI-MPVs

IN 1997, Renault tried a bit of lateral thinking with the 'people carrier' concept it pioneered with the Espace and came up with the 'midi' or 'compact' MPV (multi-purpose vehicle). The result was the original five-seat Scenic, the blueprint for even more vehicles than the original Espace inspired, and the impetus for waves of tall, space efficient 'MPV styling' across the whole car market. As one of the new car market's boom sectors over the past few years, it means there is also plenty of choice for user car buyers.

carsforkent.co.uk

CITROËN XSARA PICASSO



NO apologies for including the Picasso – it quickly trumped Renault's pioneering Scenic to become the best-seller in the new sector. It's only a five-seater, but the 'jelly mould design' smoothes the edges of a commodious and flexibly equipped box. The range features excellent turbodiesels and has a good reliability record. Plenty of choice on the used market too.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

HONDA FR-V



THOUGH late into this sector, Honda had time to review the market and decided that Fiat got it right with the Multipla. So the FR-V is another short, wide six-seater with two rows of seats, but not as roomy as the Fiat. Buyers like the peace of mind Honda's engineering gives and how the dash-mounted gearshift creates room in front.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

A little goes a long way with the Fabia GreenLine.

£199 per month
8.1% Typical APR
Only £953 Deposit



Our most fuel efficient car ever has been designed to maximise performance while minimising running costs. Its highly efficient 1.4 TDI PD engine delivers up to 83.1 mpg*, while the low CO₂ emissions and diesel particulate filter make it a breath of fresh air.

Free Road Angel worth £299 with every new Fabia Greenline ordered between 19th November and 20th December

Solutions Finance Example

41 monthly payment of	£199.00	Total amount payable	£13,543.27
Deposit	£952.17	Acceptance fee	£125.00
Retail cash price	£11,495.00	Option to purchase fee	£60.00
Amount of credit	£10,542.83	Excess mileage	4.8p per mile
Optional payment	£4,238.10	Typical APR	8.1%



For more information or to organise a test drive contact:

Walmer Adamson
137a Dover Road, Walmer,
Deal, Kent, CT14 7JH
Tel 01304 381 300 Web: www.adamsons-skoda.co.uk

Škoda. Manufacturer of happy drivers.

ALFA ROMEO

SPIDER, 3.2 V6, gj57tfy, alloy wheels, anti-lock brakes, climate control, drivers airbag, electric windows, leather interior, metallic paint, passenger airbag, power steering, remote central locking, side airbags, tinted glass, traction control, trip computer, blue, 9000 miles, £20995, Thames Group Tunbridge Wells, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

AUDI

A2, SE 5dr, gk02 oec, remote central locking, remote alarm, rear window/wiper, rear headrests, cloth upholstery, electric windows, electric mirrors, adjustable steering column, height adjustable seats, climate control, cd player, radio, twin air bags, abs, power steering, alloy wheels, blue, 58000 miles, £4995, Kings Highway Garage Ltd, Plumstead, 020 8855 4000 (TRADE)

A4, 1.9tdi 130 se estate, 2003, blue m with grey cloth, 67000 miles, £8950, Martin James Cars, Kent, 01795426700 (TRADE)

BENTLEY

ARNAGE, red label auto, 2001, blemished silver with black leather, 50000 miles, £44950, Martin James Cars, Kent, 01795426700 (TRADE)

BMW

3 SERIES, 1.6i Saloon 4d 1596cc, i316i, mot--11/04/08 good runner, green, miles, £695.00, DCD Autos, ASHFORD, 01233 642211 (TRADE)

VOLKSWAGEN GOLF 2.0 GTI TURBO



Year 2006, 3 door black. Black leather interior, 43,000 Miles, Very good condition
Tel: 07766112509

£14,600

7 SERIES, 735i AUTO, 2002, oxford green metallic with beige nappa exclusive, 79000 miles, £11950, Martin James Cars, Kent, 01795426700 (TRADE)

CADDILLAC

CTS, cts 3.6 sport luxury v6, 2005, light platinum with black leather, 22379 miles, £12950, Martin James Cars, Kent, 01795426700 (TRADE)

CARAVANS & MOTOR HOMES

CARAVAN SPRITE ALPINE, 4 berth, 15ft long, awning, shower, portalo, stabilising bar, very good condition. £695 ONO tel: 07725 952521

CHEVROLET

CAPTIVA, LTZ 2.0, gk080rwan, finished in denim blue with black interior, blue, 4000 miles, £22995, Caffyns Chevrolet T Wells, Tunbridge Wells, 01932 515700 (TRADE)

CHRYSLER

200C, 5.7v8 auto estate, 2007, brilliant crystal met with dark and light slate or, 10577 miles, £18950, Martin James Cars, Kent, 01795426700 (TRADE)

CITROEN

CITROEN BERLINGO 800, 04 2005, 1.9d 16v 5dr met with 43,000 miles fsh lined, £395, Beaver Commercials, Ashford, 01233 634763 (TRADE)

C2, 1.4i Cool 3dr, 2007, 1.4i cool 3dr hatch sp eds, poseidon blue, 7500 miles, £6595, Masters Citroen, Penge, 0208 659 0909 (TRADE)

C-CROSSER, 2.2 HDi Exclusive 5dr, 2007, 2.2 HDi exclusive 5dr diesel estate, blue, 100 miles, £19995, Wilmotts Folkestone, Folkestone, 01303 245 588 (TRADE)

C1, 1.0 Vibe 3dr, 2006, 1.0 vibe 3dr hatch, red, 9525 miles, £4995, Masters Citroen, Penge, 0208 659 0909 (TRADE)

C3, 1.1 Cool 5dr, 2007, 1.1i cool 5dr hatch special edition, passion red, 7500 miles, £6495, Masters Citroen, Folkestone, 01303 275795 (TRADE)

COUPE, 2.0 16v, 1995, red, 72451 miles, £1995, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

MAREA, TD 100 SX Weekend, 1998, red, 106000 miles, £995, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

PANDA, Active 5dr, e004ew, alarm, anti-theft system, central locking, immobiliser, cloth upholstery, folding rear seats, rear spoiler, abs, air bag, power steering, electric front windows, cd player, blue, 5000 miles, £2699, Marshalls, Maidstone, 01622 200 100 (TRADE)

AMICA, CDX 5dr, gk080p, immobiliser, cloth upholstery, head restraints, power steering, air bag, colour coded body, metallic paintwork, rear wash/wipe, stereo, aluminium silver, 6000 miles, £2699, Marshalls, Maidstone, 01622 200 100 (TRADE)

DISPATCH, 2.0 HDi Enterprise Van 900kg, 2005, 2.0 dhd enterprise van 900kg diesel, silver, 42190 miles, £6495, Barretts, Canterbury, 0845 3709766 (TRADE)

NEMO, 1.4 XE 4x4 [SLD], 2008, 1.4i x [SLD] diesel, white, 10000 miles, £7495, Wilmotts Folkestone, Folkestone, 01303 245 588 (TRADE)

FESTIA, 1.4 Ghia, 2004, panther black, 35600 miles, £5995, CB Motors, Tenterden, 01580 765011 (TRADE)

RELAY, 2.2 HDI H1 Van 100ps, 2007, 2.2 hd i1 van 100ps 30 l1 diesel, white, 4500 miles, £7995, Master Citroen, Penge, 0208 659 0909 (TRADE)

SAXO, 1.4i SX 3dr Auto, 1999, 1.4i 3dr auto hatch, polar white, 40669 miles, £1795, Masters Citroen, Penge, 0208 659 0909 (TRADE)

X-SARA, LY DIESEL, 2002, met red, 87186 miles, £3395, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

SCUDO EL, 05 2000, 2.0 jtd 3 seats twin doors white 119,000 no vat, 0 miles, £2400, Beaver Commercials, Ashford, 01233 634763 (TRADE)

FATI

PUNTO, active 1.2, 2003, silver, 45000 miles, £295, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

MONDOE, 1.8 TDCi Titanium 5dr [6] [2007 -], 1.8 TDCi 5dr [6] [2005 -], 31/01/2008, cd player abs driver airbag power steering immobiliser electronic windows, blue, 6747 miles, £10000, Invicta Motors, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

GALAXY, 1.8 TDCi Zetec 5dr [6] [2006 -], 01/08/2008, silver, 13299 miles, £15500, Invicta Motors, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

KA, Zetec Climate, 2008, moondust silver, 0 miles, £6995, CB Motors, Tenterden, 01580 765011 (TRADE)

MONDOE, 1.8 TDCi Titanium 5dr [6] [2007 -], 17/12/2007, blue, 7709 miles, £18000, Invicta Motors, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

BRAVO 1.9 SX, 2001 "y", a medium sized car with a 1.9 engine, pass/clock/s hist very reasonably priced, a 3 month warranty is offered on the service price and we will give your old car in part exchange, a new mot test will be included, blue, 75,000 miles, £1495, Courtenay Cars, Charing, Ashford, 01233 714848 (TRADE)

CINQUECENTO, m/1994, manual locking manual windows, red, 74,000 miles, £1695 now £955, Courtenay Cars, Charing, Ashford, 01233 714848 (TRADE)

COUPE, 2.0 16v, 1995, red, 72451 miles, £1995, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

MAREA, TD 100 SX Weekend, 1998, red, 106000 miles, £995, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

PANDA, Active 5dr, e004ew, alarm, anti-theft system, central locking, immobiliser, cloth upholstery, folding rear seats, rear spoiler, abs, air bag, power steering, electric front windows, cd player, blue, 5000 miles, £3995, Automatically Ray Morris (Welling), Welling, 0208 303 4030 (TRADE)

AMICA, CDX 5dr, gk080p, immobiliser, cloth upholstery, head restraints, power steering, abs, multiple airbags, metallic paintwork, rear wash/wipe, electric front windows, air conditioning, blue, 2000 miles, £6495, Automatically Ray Morris (Welling), Welling, 0208 303 4030 (TRADE)

COUPE, SE 1975cc 3 door, 2006, cd player air conditioning, alloy wheels central locking approved driver's airbag power steering history check, electric windows, silver, 17200 miles, £7995, Pomphrey's of Sittingbourne, Sittingbourne, 01795 476222 (TRADE)

GETZ, CDX 5dr, gk080p, air conditioning, alloy wheels, side airbags, radio/cd, power steering, tow pack, side steps, rear wash/wipe, sunroof, 4x4, road tax (plg) is £185 per year on this vehicle, blue, 3000 miles, £6495, Automatically Ray Morris (Welling), Welling, 0208 303 4030 (TRADE)

MATRIX, 1.6 GSi 5dr Auto, 10/05/2006, red, 35697 miles, £4999, Invicta Motors, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

MONDOE, 1.6 TDCi 5dr [6] [2005 -], 31/01/2008, cd player abs driver airbag power steering immobiliser electronic windows, blue, 6747 miles, £10000, Invicta Motors, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

JAGUAR

XJ V8, 4.0 sovereign lwb, 2002, seafrost blue met with catkin leather interior, 71000 miles, £9950, Martin James Cars, Kent, 01795426700 (TRADE)

MONDOE, 1.8 TDCi Titanium 5dr [6] [2007 -], 17/12/2007, blue, 7709 miles, £18000, Invicta Motors, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

GRAND CHEROKEE, 1997, green, 180000 miles, £2995, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

MINI

COOPER S, 1.6 3 DR, 2002, trim: cloth engine size: 1600 transmission: manual no: 3, blue, 42000 miles, £7250, KENT, 01843585186 (PRIVATE)

ROVER

200, 216 CABRIOLET, 1997, grey, 0 miles, £1295, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

SKODA

SKODA OCTAVIA ESTATE CAR, 03 2000, 2.0 gti air/con elec windows 80,000 miles blue fsh no vat, £1495, Beaver Commercials, Ashford, 01233 634763 (TRADE)

S-MAX, 1.8 TDCi GS 5dr, gk07jwp, air-conditioning, abs + ebd, air, cd player, 2005/03/2008, silver, 15195 miles, £1400, Invicta Motors, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

TRANSIT, High Roof Van TDCi 115PS, 2008, £1495, white, 3999 miles, £13490, SMC Ford Crayford, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

HONDA

CIVIC 5 DOOR, 2006/2005, cd player driver airbag power steering electric windows, silver, 2295 miles, £6900, Invicta Motors, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

HYUNDAI

ACCENT, GSi 5dr, gk05mp, immobiliser, cloth upholstery, head restraints, power steering, air bag, colour coded body, metallic paintwork, rear wash/wipe, stereo, aluminium silver, 6000 miles, £2699, Marshalls, Maidstone, 01622 200 100 (TRADE)

FREELANDER

4400, 2.0 TD4i 16v 5dr, 2001, met with 106000 miles, £995, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

PEUGEOT

LAND ROVER

DEFENDER, 90 2.5 Hard Top, e611vog, tow pack, radio cassette, power steering, 4x4, road tax (plg) is £185 per year on this vehicle, blue, 57000 miles, £495, Diesel Centre, Staplehurst, 01580 890333 (TRADE)

PORSCHE

911 CARRERA 4, 2002, meridian silver with blue leather, 46000 miles, £2950, Martin James Cars, Kent, 01795426700 (TRADE)

RENAULT

CLIO, 1.2 Panache Ltd Edn Hatchback 1149cc, £730lh, new mot good 1st car, red, miles, £895.00, DCD Autos, ASHFORD, 01233 642211 (TRADE)

VOLKSWAGEN

CADDY, C20 SDI, £b5kif, side door, door handle, cd player, colour coded body, air bag, abs, traction control, remote central locking, 3 door, 1500 miles, £2495, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

GOLF

2.8 vr6, 1998, black, 93000 miles, £2500, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

POLO

1.4 CL Hatchback 3Dr, V1990, arcon ps electric windows electric mirrors radio/cd player, bright red, 63,000 miles, £2395, Clearways Commercials, Sevenoaks, 01474 853034 (TRADE)

LUPO

3dr, gj4uh, power steering, metallic paintwork, immobiliser, cloth upholstery, silver, 27000 miles, £1515, Clearways Commercials, Sevenoaks, 01474 853034 (TRADE)

TRANSPORTER

2.4 D 5 SE Saloon 4d 2401cc (2002), 02, full leather fully loaded, gold, miles, £5750, Bob Fisher Garage, Ashford, 01303 814131 (TRADE)

VOLKSWAGEN

S80, 2.4 D5 SE Saloon 4d 2401cc (2002), 02, full leather fully loaded, gold, miles, £5750, Bob Fisher Garage, Ashford, 01303 814131 (TRADE)

V70

2.4 (140 bhp) SE Estate 5d 2435cc (2000), 50, 21, blue, miles, £3899.00, Bob Fisher Garage, Ashford, 01303 814131 (TRADE)

MITSUBISHI

COLT, 1.5 Sport, 2004, black, miles, £6995, Masters Group Mitsubishi Bromley, Beckenham, 020 6567122 (TRADE)

NISSAN

MICRA, 1.2 SE Automatic, 2004, techno grey, 22500 miles, £4995, CB Motors, Tenterden, 01304 765011 (TRADE)

TOYOTA

AYGO, 1.0 WT-i + 3dr, 2006, 1.0 vvt-i + 3dr hatch, grey, 14726 miles, £5995, Masters Citroen, Penge, 0208 599 0909 (TRADE)

VAUXHALL

AGILA, 1.199cc 5 door Enjoy, 2001, history check, 7635 miles, £2595, Pomphrey's of Sittingbourne, Sittingbourne, 01795 476222 (TRADE)

VOLKSWAGEN

CADDY, C20 SDI, £b5kif, side door, door handle, cd player, colour coded body, air bag, abs, traction control, remote central locking, 3 door, 1500 miles, £2495, Clearways Commercials, Sevenoaks, 01474 853034 (TRADE)

GOLF, 2.8 vr6, 1998, black, 93000 miles, £2500, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

POLO, 1.4 CL Hatchback 3Dr, V1990, arcon ps electric windows electric mirrors radio/cd player, bright red, 63,000 miles, £2395, Clearways Commercials, Sevenoaks, 01474 853034 (TRADE)

MAZDA

6S, 2005, blue metallic, 19299 miles, £6495, WJ King Vauxhall, Bromley, 020 8464 3456 (TRADE)

MERCEDES-BENZ

C CLASS, C180k Avantgarde SE, 4763314, alloy wheels, cubane silver, 14000 miles, £17995, Martin James Cars, Kent, 01795426700 (TRADE)

AUTOMATICALLY RAY MORRIS

WELLING, Welling, 0208 303 4030 (TRADE)

MG

MGF MG TF LE500 Special Edition

135, petrol orange, 10 miles, £16398, SMC Mitsubishi Sittingbourne, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

MINI

COOPER S, 1.6 3 DR, 2002, trim:

cloth engine size: 1600 transmission:

manual no: 3, blue, 42000 miles,

grey, £7250, KENT, 01843585186 (PRIVATE)

ROVER

201, 216 CABRIOLET, 1997, grey, 0 miles, £1295, County Car Sales, Dover, 01304 242324 (TRADE)

SKODA

SKODA OCTAVIA ESTATE CAR, 03

2000, 2.0 gti air/con elec windows

80,000 miles blue fsh no vat, £1495,

Beaver Commercials, Ashford, 01233

634763 (TRADE)

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New start for 2009

The Royal School of Military Engineering Course Designer Salary £34,000 per annum

MidKent College (MKC) is delighted to partner the Royal School of Military Engineering (RSME) at Brompton Barracks, Chatham.

We provide the trades and technical training for over 8500 Royal Engineers each year and are recruiting a number of key posts to complement the teams already in place at the RSME.

If you are a Course Designer and would enjoy using your skills and experience to help develop the Military artisans of tomorrow, then this could be the ideal opportunity for you.

You will work within an established team, in a professional environment at a time when the RSME moves into an exciting phase of its development.

Whilst you will already have skills, qualifications and experience relevant for this post, you will be fully supported and encouraged to gain further appropriate qualifications and accreditation that will develop you as an individual and benefit the RSME.

If this sounds like the right role for you – get in touch now

For an application form and job description please: Visit our website www.midkent.ac.uk
Email: rsme.recruitment@midkent.ac.uk
Telephone 01634 884555 (24 hr answer machine)

For an informal discussion on these positions, please call: Ken Pullan on 07725128661

Closing Date 30th November 2008

The College is committed to Equal Opportunities and to selection on merit. It welcomes applications from all sections of society. We particularly welcome and encourage applications from under represented groups including black, minority ethnic and disabled people.

MidKent College is an equal opportunity employer



MKC Training Services Limited
at The Royal School of Military Engineering



New start for 2009

The Royal School of Military Engineering Support Opportunities

Mid Kent College (MKC) is delighted to partner the Royal School of Military Engineering (RSME) at Brompton Barracks, Chatham.

We provide the trades and technical training for over 8500 Royal Engineers each year and are recruiting a number of key posts to complement the teams already in place at the RSME.

Facilities Manager Circa £38,000 – to take full responsibility for the buildings & infrastructure (including workshops and classrooms) occupied by MKC Training Services on site at the RSME. Experience of the management of Electro/Mechanical services essential.

Workshop Assistant £19,008 - £21,000 – to provide practical support within the Fitter Department, assisting with the smooth running of the stores, light maintenance duties and the movement of equipment. Would suit someone with a mechanical background and a current Fork Lift licence.

ICT Site Engineer £19,736 - £25,441 – to provide support and maintenance in response to “logged” fault calls. Must be familiar with the configuration and use of all Microsoft desk top operating systems and experienced with configuring and installing computer hardware/ancillary components.

You will work within an established team, in a professional environment at a time when the RSME moves into an exciting phase of its development.

Whilst you will already have skills, qualifications and/or experience relevant for these posts, you will be fully supported and encouraged to gain further appropriate qualifications and accreditation that will develop you as an individual and benefit the RSME.

For an application form and job description please: Visit our website www.midkent.ac.uk
Email: rsme.recruitment@midkent.ac.uk
Telephone 01634 884555 (24 hr answer machine)

For an informal discussion on these positions, please call: Ken Pullan on 07725128661

Closing Date 5th December 2008

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SELECTION OF CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

ADMIN AND CLERICAL / DOMESTIC SERVICES

Job Title: Clinic Support Clerk

Salary: £12,922 to £15,950 pa
Band: 2
Hours: 3.5
Location: Chatham
Ref: 767-EC5644
Closing date: 04/12/08

Job Title: Secretary to Head of IM&T

Salary: £14,834 to £17,732 pa
Band: 3
Hours: 37.5
Location: Trinity House, Ashford
Ref: 767-ASH228
Closing date: 05/12/08

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY REGISTERED

Job Title: Community Health Nurse

Salary: £20,225 to £26,123 pa
Band: 5
Hours: 37.5
Location: Dover Health Centre
Ref: 767-ASH228
Closing date: 05/12/08

Job Title: Community Health Nurse (School Nursing)

Salary: £20,225 to £26,123 pa
Band: 5
Hours: 30
Location: Dover Health Centre
Ref: 767-ASH227
Closing date: 05/12/08

Job Title: Staff Nurse

Salary: £20,225 to £26,123 pa
Band: 5
Hours: 37.5
Location: Faversham Cottage Hospital
Ref: 767-ASH229
Closing date: 06/12/08

Job Title: Nurse Practitioner MIU

Salary: £24,103 to £32,653 pa
Band: 6
Hours: 37.5
Location: Sheppey Community Hospital
Ref: 767-ASH230
Closing date: 06/12/08

Job Title: Clinical Nurse Specialist x 3

Salary: £29,091 - £38,385
Band: 7
Hours: 37.5
Location: Protea House, Dover
Ref: 767-ECC645
Closing date: 11/12/08

ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Job Title: Highly Specialist Obesity Dietitian

Salary: £29,091 to £38,352 pa
Band: 7
Hours: 37.5
Location: Sittingbourne Research Centre
Ref: 767-ASH191
Closing date: 03/12/08

Job Title: Prescribing Project Dietitian

Salary: £20,225 to £26,123 pa
Band: 5
Hours: 37.5
Location: William Harvey Hospital, Ashford
Ref: 767-ASH232
Closing date: 08/12/08

Job Title: Speech & Language Therapist (Schools Team & Early Years)

Salary: £20,225 - £26,123
Band: 5
Hours: 37.5
Location: QVMH, Herne Bay & Local Primary Schools, Thanet
Ref: 767-ECC639
Closing date: 16/12/08

Job Title: Speech & Language Therapist (Language Unit & Early Years)

Salary: £20,225 - £26,123
Band: 5
Hours: 37.5
Location: Lealeham Gap School & Canterbury Health Centre
Ref: 767-ECC638
Closing date: 16/12/08

Job Title: Specialist Speech & Language Therapist (Schools Team)

Salary: £20,225 - £26,123
Band: 5
Hours: 37.5
Location: Mill Lane House, Margate
Ref: 767-ECC637
Closing date: 16/12/08

Job Title: Speech & Language Therapist (Schools Team & Early Years)

Salary: £20,225 - £26,123
Band: 5
Hours: 37.5
Location: Whistable Health Centre & Local Primary Schools
Ref: 767-ECC639
Closing date: 16/12/08

Job Title: Specialist Speech & Language Therapist (Schools Team)

Salary: £24,103 - £32,653
Band: 6
Hours: 37.5
Location: Mill Lane House, Margate
Ref: 767-ECC634
Closing date: 16/12/08

Job Title: Highly Specialist Speech & Language Therapist (Schools Team)

Salary: £29,091 - £38,352
Band: 7
Hours: 26.25
Location: Canterbury & Faversham Schools
Ref: 767-ECC631
Closing date: 16/12/08

Job Title: Specialist Speech & Language Therapist (Early Years)

Salary: £24,103 - £32,653
Band: 6
Hours: 18.75
Location: Seashells Children's Centre, Sheerness
Ref: 767-ECC632
Closing date: 16/12/08

Job Title: Specialist Speech & Language Therapist (ASD/Secondary School Service)

Salary: £24,103 - £32,653
Band: 6
Hours: 37.5
Location: Spring Lane Neighbourhood Centre, Canterbury
Ref: 767-ECC633
Closing date: 16/12/08

ADDITIONAL CLINICAL SERVICES

Job Title: Healthcare Assistant

Salary: £12,922 to £15,950 pa
Band: 2
Hours: 30
Location: Faversham Cottage Hospital
Ref: 767-ASH231
Closing date: 08/12/08

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Our Managing Director is looking for an experienced Personal Assistant with a meticulous approach who is used to exercising confidentiality and diplomacy.

You will be a good communicator, capable of working on your own initiative. You should have experience of managing diaries, maintaining records as well as arranging and assisting at meetings, responding to correspondence, dealing with telephone calls and enquiries, as well as experience of preparing agendas for meetings. You will also be responsible for receiving visitors and dealing with all enquiries about Ashford's Future at first point of contact.

For an informal discussion please contact Judith Armitt on 01233 330811.

Alternatively for an application form and further details, please send an A4 stamped addressed envelope to:

Personnel and Development, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL

or e-mail recruitment@ashford.gov.uk

Closing date: 5 December 2008.

www.ashfordbestplaced.co.uk/jobs



Career Opportunities



Canterbury College is an equal opportunities employer

Canterbury College is a Further and Higher Education College in the heart of Kent. Our goal is to be one of the best FE Colleges in England by 2010. We have 9,000 students across 300 courses and enjoy an enviable reputation as a great place to learn. Our brand new £50M campus is also home to nearly 800 staff and we have some great career opportunities which may be right for you.

Head of Faculty A Levels, Science & Humanities

37 hours per week, salary starting from £42,128 per annum

Ref 06/103

Lecturer Early Years

2 posts at 37 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 per annum

Ref 08/40

Temporary Lecturer Performing Arts and Contemporary Dance

27.75 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum.

Ref 08/152

Temporary post to cover maternity leave not to exceed one year
Temporary post to teach HNC/FD and BA programmes.

Ref S/HE/BE

Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum.
Applicants must hold a first degree in any discipline.

Supply Lecturers

Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

Ref S/DN

Dental Nursing

Ref S/IAG

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Ref S/MH

Mental Health

Ref S/MID

Midwifery

Ref S/C&H

Catering and Hospitality

Ref S/KSAC

Key Skills Application of Number within Animal Care

Ref S/EY

Early Years to teach BTEC First Diploma in Child Care, Learning and Development

Ref S/TD/ME

Supply Trainer Demonstrators

Various hours available, salary starting from £18,963 pro rata per annum

Ref ATA

Mechanical Engineering

Ref TD8

Machining (turning and milling)

Ref 08/153

Fabrication and Welding

Network Applications Technician (Advanced)

37 hours per week, salary starting from £21,440 per annum

Ref CLC1

Trainer Demonstrator Hospitality & Catering

2 posts at 18.5 hours per week, salary starting from £18,963 pro rata per annum

Ref 08/154

Trainer Demonstrator Hospitality & Catering

9.25 hours per week, salary starting from £18,963 pro rata per annum

Ref ACC1

Skills for Life Initial Assessor

18.5 hours per week, salary starting from £15,085 pro rata per annum

Ref S/ASS/EY

Cleaning Coordinator

37 hours per week, salary starting from £16,914 per annum.

Ref CLC1

4 week shift pattern – 3 weeks nights and 1 week of days

Ref ACC1

Assistant Cleaning Coordinator

37 hours per week, salary starting from £15,085 pro rata per annum (nights)

Ref CLC1

Supply NVQ Assessors in Early Years

Various hours available, salary range from £18,295 - £26,232 pro rata per annum

Ref CLC1

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The closing date for the above posts is Monday 8th December 2008 at 12 noon

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PUBLIC NOTICE

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL THE MARRIAGE ACT 1949 AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 2004 APPROVED PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES & CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

An application has been made to Kent County Council to grant a renewal of an approval for the following premises to act as a venue for the solemnisation of civil marriages and civil partnerships: Name of Premises: Salmestone Grange, Nash Road, Margate Applicant: William Whelan The application and plan of the premises may be inspected at the address below during normal office hours. Any person may give written objection to the grant of the renewal of the approval of the premises, within 21 days from the date of this newspaper. Objections should be sent to the address below. Martin Alford, Head of Registration Regulatory Services First Floor, Invicta House, County Hall Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX



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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Focus on staff welfare pays off for holiday park

KEEPING its staff as happy as its customers has won Ashcroft Coast Holiday Park, near Leysdown, the national Investors in People award.

The title provides a framework for improving performance and competitiveness through training and development.

Gary Cook, general manager, said: "As part of our parent company, Park Resorts, we already had good practices in place, including training courses and a mystery shopper scheme.

"Since we started working with Investors in People I now hold weekly heads-of-department meetings and they in turn have their own team meetings.

"We also have 'Ten on Ten' daily, a ten-minute get-together to discuss any issues arising and which helps boost morale."

Marketing on the menu at breakfast meetings

A SERIES of business breakfasts offering practical marketing help and advice has been organised by the Kent branch of the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM).

Using professional marketers and aimed at the county's small and medium sized businesses (SMEs), Simply Better Marketing will help people make the most of marketing resources.

The first three events will offer businesses simple marketing advice. They will be run in conjunction with Business Link and hosted by Canterbury Christ Church University at Hall Place Enterprise Centre, Harbledown.

They are on February 25, March 25 and April 30. The Kent Branch of the CIM has more than 1,000 members.

For details, visit www.cim.co.uk.

Buy local to boost county economy this Christmas

PRODUCED IN KENT, the champion of food and drink producers across the county, is hoping more people than ever will take a trip to their local farm shops, independent retailers and farmers' markets when getting ready for Christmas.

Many families will be looking for ways to save money this year and it is also a time when local producers can compete with supermarkets in terms of seasonal staples.

Market research has shown that every £10 spent on local produce is worth £25 to the Kent economy, compared with only £14 when it's spent in a supermarket.

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COST-CUTTING: Expanding businesses are finding it cheaper to demolish unused buildings than to pay the hefty empty rates bill with which they can find themselves lumbered

You've left the glass half-empty, Darling

■ BY **TONY PATEY**

THANET'S businesspeople say Chancellor Alistair Darling's Pre-Budget Report failed to tackle the 'Bombshell Britain' empty property rate which they say is hitting east Kent's commercial infrastructure.

From April, the Government will offer a temporary benefit to owners of commercial buildings with a rateable value below £15,000.

But David Foley, chief executive of Thanet and East Kent Chamber, said: "It offers no relief at all to owners of empty buildings designated for business use such as large offices, warehouses, factories, pubs, restaurants and any premises above the size of a small shop.

"It's our contention that the Act in itself betrays a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of commercial risk.

"In a long-standing campaign, this chamber has highlighted four consequences of the legislation since its introduction on April 1 this year.

"Firstly, the Act prevents the natural business cycle of expansion and contraction so necessary in response to market demands.

"One member company wishes to expand from a 50,000 sq ft to an 85,000 sq ft warehouse but is unable to do so since it would leave behind an empty rates bill of £50,000 a year. Penalising success is not a wise policy.

"Secondly, without a pre-let tenant, no right-minded property investor is willing to commit to constructing commercial premises in the face of the pernicious charges levied after the first three or six months following its completion.

"Thirdly, the Act promises to achieve what the mighty Luftwaffe did not manage throughout the Second World War: the destruction of commercial property throughout England and Wales.

"This chamber has learned of many sound properties being demolished by their owners.

"With no income from tenants, many owners have no alternative but to demolish the building – the only way of avoiding bankruptcy as a direct result of the new tax.

"Finally, the damage to business confidence in many vulnerable areas already suffering from severe deprivation is significant. Who is prepared to value the commercial buildings in England and Wales if the UK government does not?

"There is a clear message from the business community that the Government has missed an opportunity to stimulate the economy at a time when it is most needed."

Unanimous

Kent MPs Roger Gale and Dr Steve Ladyman, as well as Cllr Sandy Ezekiel, leader of Thanet council, are supporting the chamber's campaign for the full repeal of the Act.

Thanet was the first district council in England to debate a motion calling for the Act to be reversed – it was carried unanimously.

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Yorath delight as Blues escape points penalty



Picture DANE STEWART

TROUBLED TIMES: Going into administration could have cost Margate a ten-point penalty

Wanderers shut out by high-flyers

THANET Wanderers suffered their biggest defeat of the season as they went down to title contenders Basingstoke at St Peter's Recreation Ground.

The hosts lost 44-0 to the Hampshire side, who are one point off the lead in London 2 South. It was the first time Wanderers had failed to score in the league this season.

The defeat, Thanet's fourth in a row, saw them slip into the division's bottom two, although they are five points clear of rock bottom Maidstone.

This Saturday they visit fourth-placed Dorking looking for only their second away win of the season.

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Catch-up with the action from Invicta Dynamos' game against Oxford City Stars

Revenge on menu in reserves derby

MARGATE Reserves will be looking for revenge as they take on Thanet rivals Ramsgate in the Kent Floodlight Trophy tonight.

The two sides have met once already this season in the league and Ramsgate edged the five goal thriller 3-2.

Ramsgate reserves were supposed to be in action on Saturday, but their tie against Hythe Town was called off due to a waterlogged pitch at Southwood Stadium.

However, Ramsgate under-18s battled against the weather to beat Canterbury Youth 4-1, with goals from Josh Payne, Darren Clapton and a brace from Matt Browning.

PLEASE SEND YOUR SPORTS STORIES TO SPORTS EDITOR GLENN PEARSON AT glenn.pearson@kosmedia.co.uk

TERRY Yorath has spoken of his relief after his Margate side escaped a 10-point deduction.

The Gate had looked set to enter a Company Voluntary Arrangement last week over an unpaid debt to HM Customs and Revenue.

However, the club reached an agreement with HMRC on Tuesday last week, adjourning the case for 14 days to allow it to meet the terms of the agreement.

HMRC will then withdraw its petition.

"It means a lot to all of us," Yorath said on the club's website after Saturday's 2-1 home defeat to Staines.

"I've only been here a short while

FOOTBALL

and I've got it in my blood now and it was a great relief to me on Tuesday. When it went through, I gave Keith [Piper, Margate's chairman] a big hug because I knew how much it meant to him."

Yorath was able to give his squad the good news before Tuesday's 2-1 Kent Senior Cup defeat away to Maidstone.

Despite the result, the former Wales manager said news of the reprieve had given his players a massive lift.

"On Tuesday I was able to go and tell them that the club's OK and

that we're not going to be deducted 10 points," he said. "To be honest, all of them just gave a big cheer and they knew they had something to play for this season."

Had Margate suffered a points deduction, they would have dropped from 18th to 22nd in the Ryman Premier Division – into the relegation zone and eight points from safety.

Margate have had a troubled decade on and off the field. They were exiled to Dover in 2002 after plans to redevelop Hartsdown Park stalled, but after dropping from the Conference to the Ryman Premier Division they returned home in 2005.



BATTLE: Wayne Wilson (left in blue) and Danny Stubbs (right) worked hard in midfield, with the latter on target in the second half, but it was not enough to stop Gate sliding to defeat



Picture: CORINNE COOPER

Staines leave their mark as Gate throw it all away

RELIEF was the overwhelming emotion at a wintry Hartsdown Park on Saturday.

However, any elation fans felt at the news that their club had been spared a ten-point deduction by the Ryman League would have been tempered by the way they threw away three points against Staines.

Manager Terry Yorath will need to instruct his players in the under-rated art of hoofing the ball into Row Z in an emergency.

Twice Margate failed to clear their lines in the first half and twice it cost them.

On 17 minutes Scott Taylor pounced on the confusion created by a long throw and four minutes from the interval Jon McDonald did likewise from a free-kick.

Yorath told the club's website his players had lacked self-belief in the first half.

"Second half they came back into it and they had a go and really we should have come out of the game with a draw at least," he said.

FOOTBALL

■ BY YOURTHANET REPORTER

Margate 1

Stubbs 59

Staines 2

Taylor 17, McDonald 41

The Gate pulled one back after 59 minutes when Mo Takaloo flicked on a long throw from Curtis Robinson and Dan Stubbs scored a brilliant volley, but despite two penalty appeals, they were unable to draw level.

Yorath admitted his squad would need reinforcements.

"We brought a centre forward in today who I think looks a good player, but what we really need up front is a rough diamond," he said.

Margate starting XI



Subs used: Stubbs (Pratt), Savage (Robinson), Mascare (Quain)

"We want someone who is going to stick their head in, win a few headers and we can feed off that."

"But I believe that if you looked at the second half today you'd turn round and say that team's good enough to get out of the difficulties they're in."

• The Gate were due to travel to Princes Park to play Dartford in the Premier Division on Tuesday. Log on to www.yourthanet.co.uk for a full report.

Rams bounce back with crucial victory

FOOTBALL

■ BY YOURTHANET REPORTER

Ashford Town (Middx) 0

Ramsgate 3

May 23, 75, Royston 74

RAMSGATE shocked promotion hopefuls Ashford Town with a 3-0 win in Middlesex on Saturday.

A first-half strike from Jay May and two goals in as many second-half minutes handed the Thanet side three fully-deserved points and lifted them above Hendon into 20th place in the Ryman Premier Division.

Chances were at a premium in a cagey first-half, but the visitors went in front in the 23rd minute.

Deflected

Steffan Ball's free-kick forced Town keeper Paul Burgess to concede a corner, from which a Ryan Royston shot was deflected wide.

The second corner fell to Stuart Bamford, who could only head the ball into no-man's land, allowing May to steal in and nod the ball past Burgess.

Bamford collected a booking for protesting and on the stroke of half-time Burgess spared the home side after Ball released Ben Brown, whose left-foot shot was clawed away.

Ramsgate moved through the gears in the

Ramsgate starting XI



Subs: Walker (Brown 71), Schulz (Hadden 71), Schoburgh (Ball 84)

second half and almost added a second seven minutes after the restart with a skidding shot from Ball that Burgess did well to keep out.

Ramsgate's back-line restricted the home side to speculative shots from distance and a triple substitution on the hour made little impact.

Ramsgate remained the more likely scorers, with May shanking a shot wide.

Jack Dello was belatedly called into action when he blocked a Warren Harris effort, but although Gavin Smith turned in the rebound he was ruled offside.

In the 74th minute Ramsgate finally got some breathing space when a Ball corner was only cleared as far as Royston, whose volley was deflected past Burgess.

Within a minute the game was effectively up for Ashford, when Ball lashed in a low cross and May tapped in the visitors' third from close range.

On Saturday, the Rams face a tricky-looking trip to AFC Hornchurch, the side that beat them 2-1 on the opening day of the season.



REWARD: Ramsgate boss Jim Ward saw his struggling side claim a superb away win to move up the Ryman Premier table

LEAGUE TABLES

RYMAN PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	Gd	Pt
1 Dover Athletic	17	15	0	2	+24	45
2 Carshalton Athletic	19	11	4	4	+7	37
3 Staines Town	17	11	3	3	+14	36
4 Canvey Island	20	10	5	5	+13	35
5 Tonbridge Angels	19	9	5	5	+11	32
6 Maidstone United	18	9	3	6	+7	30
7 Tooting & M'ham U	19	9	2	8	+2	29
8 Ashford Town (Middx)	17	9	0	8	+4	27
9 Billericay Town	18	7	5	6	-6	26
10 Wealdstone	20	7	4	9	+1	25
11 AFC Hornchurch	17	7	4	6	+1	25
12 Hastings United	19	8	0	11	-8	24
13 Sutton United	16	6	5	5	-3	23
14 Horsham	18	7	2	9	-8	23
15 Boreham Wood	18	6	4	8	-7	22
16 Harlow Town	15	6	3	6	+5	21
17 Dartford	18	6	3	9	-3	21
18 Margate	20	5	3	12	-13	18
19 Harrow Borough	18	4	6	8	-14	18
20 Ramsgate	19	3	7	9	-13	16
21 Hendon	18	4	3	11	-3	15
22 Heybridge Swifts	18	1	7	10	-11	10

FIXTURES

Saturday, December 6

Ryman Premier Division

AFC Hornchurch v Ramsgate

Margate v Carshalton Athletic

Late change saves quartet from being caught in Mumbai horror

CRICKET

FOUR Kent cricketers in the England Performance Programme returned to the county on Friday after their tour of India was cancelled due to the terror attacks in Mumbai.

Joe Denly, Rob Key, Amjad Khan and Robbie Joseph were 500 miles away in Bangalore preparing for their first warm-up match when the attacks began on Wednesday last week.

It has emerged that the Kent quartet could easily have been caught up in the chaos but for a late change to their itinerary.

Former England captain Michael Vaughan, who was also in the EPP, wrote in his column with a national newspaper that the original training camp for the squad was due to be Mumbai but was switched to Bangalore.

Terrorists

The team would have stayed in the Taj Mahal, one of the hotels attacked by terrorists.

The EPP squad had been due to travel to Mumbai today, ahead of a fortnight spent in the city.

But due to the increased threat to security the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) decided to send the 15 players back home straight away, along with the main England squad.

ECB managing director Hugh Morris said: "This is a tragic event and the players feel desperately sorry for all who are caught up in the events."

The news was a particular blow to paceman Khan, who had been called into the squad for the games as cover for the injured Andrew Flintoff and Stuart Broad.

England are expected to return to India for the two-match Test series next month, but it is unclear whether the EPP squad will join them.



CLOSE SHAVE: Joe Denly and three of his county colleagues were due to be staying in Mumbai

HOCKEY



BEATEN: Cliftonville were overpowered by Holcombe

Ville roughed up by Hasbeens

CLIFTONVILLE were left muttering about the opposition's physical approach and the umpiring after their 1st team slipped to a 2-1 defeat against Holcombe Hasbeens.

They made a bright start but were quickly subdued by the Medway side's bruising approach and ended up grateful that keeper Dan Sheppard put in a man-of-the-match display to keep the score respectable.

The Ladies' 1sts suffered an equally disappointing defeat against Meopham.

In their first home game for a number of weeks, a drastically reshuffled Cliftonville side repeatedly gave the ball away cheaply.

They went close to conceding an early goal when keeper/captain Sharon Pryce had a moment of madness and clattered an opposition forward, giving away a penalty.

She instantly redeemed herself by saving the flick and Cliftonville improved drastically after the break.

Momentum

However, a series of short corners failed to produce a breakthrough and the home side gradually lost momentum.

With the game petering out, they were caught by a classic sucker-punch with ten minutes left, and the 1-0 defeat drops them four places in the table.

The Men's 2nds enjoyed a 4-2 win over Gravesham and got off to the perfect start when Rob Macer put them ahead after just 16 seconds with a shot that trickled home.

Gravesham drew level from a penalty corner, but Mark Tiley restored the lead when he reacted quickest to a rebound from a short corner.

Gravesham equalised from open play before the interval, but the Ville took charge in the second half.

James Perks linked well with Tiley up front and Paul Cobb bossed the midfield, and they went ahead when Tiley slid in at the far post and he completed his hat-trick with a killer fourth goal.

The Ladies' 3rds also won, beating Meopham 2-0. Enjoying the rare luxury of a full team and substitutes, Ville made a bright start against the division leaders.

The breakthrough came after 20 minutes when Lacey Hinson made it 1-0.

The opposition grew increasingly riled and moments after the interval Hinson struck again to complete the scoring.

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GILLS BOSS: Gills boss Mark Stimson on the loss of the club's scouting network



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